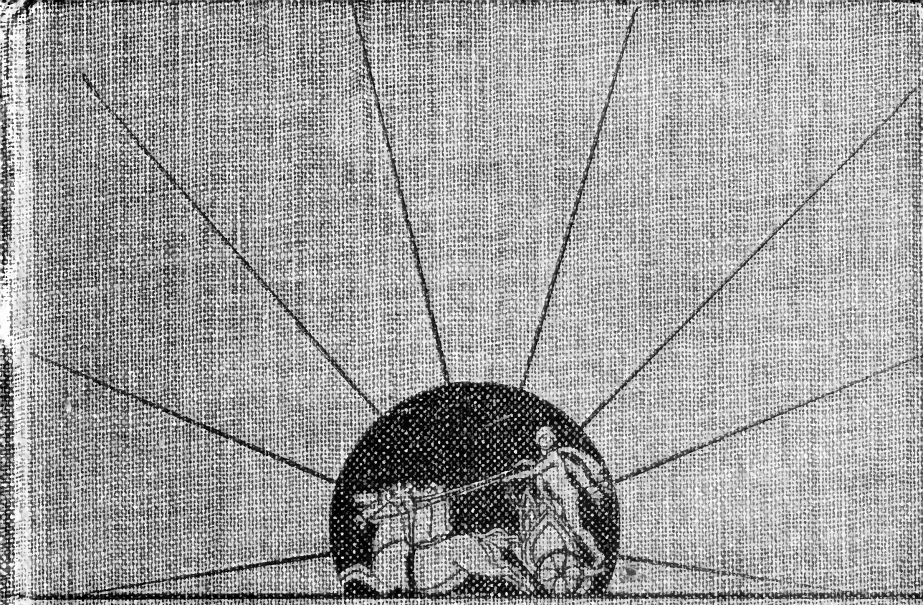
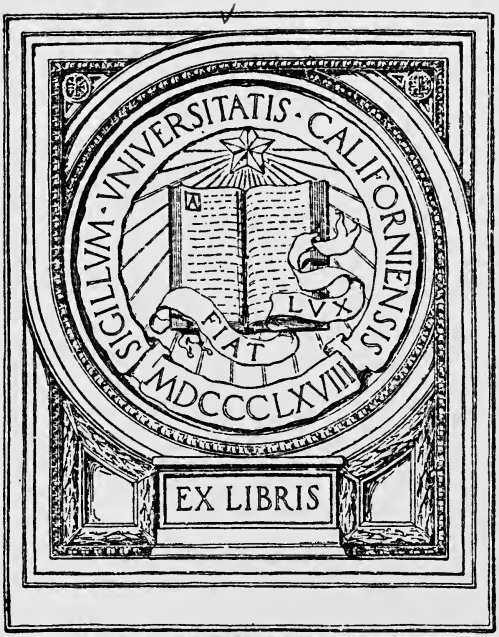


NIGHTS WITH THE GODS

DR. EMIL REICH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NIGHTS WITH THE GODS . .

NIGHTS WITH THE GODS

BY

EMIL REICH

DOCTOR JURIS

Author of

"Foundations of Modern Europe"

"Success among Nations" etc.

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

The great spirits of the past, chiefly Hellenes, recently revisited England. With a view to an exchange of ideas on English contemporary life, they met at night in various towns of Italy, where, by the favour of Dionysus, the author was allowed to be present, and to take notes at the proceedings. The following pages contain some of the speeches delivered in the Assembly of the Gods and Heroes.

The Author.

33 St Luke's Road,
Notting Hill,
London, W.

NIGHTS WITH THE GODS

THE FIRST NIGHT

ARISTOTLE ON SPECIALISM IN ENGLAND

The first night the gods and heroes assembled on the heights around Florence. From the magnificent town there came only a faint glimmer of artificial light, and the Arno rolled its waves melodiously towards the sea. On a height full of convenient terraces, offering a view on the Lily of the Arno, on Fiesole, and on the finely undulating outlines of the Apennine Mountains, the Assembly sat down. From afar one could see the bold lines of the copy of Michelangelo's David on the hill. The evening was lovely and balmy. Zeus opened the meeting with a request directed to Alexander, King of Macedon, to ask his teacher Aristotle to entertain them with his experiences at the seats of modern learning and study. Alexander did so, and the grave Stagirite, mellowed by the years, addressed the Assembly as follows:

"All my mortal life I have tried, by reading, by making vast collections of natural objects and animals, and by the closest thinking on the facts furnished to me by men of all sorts of professions and crafts, to get at some unity of knowledge. I held, and still hold, that just as Nature is one, so ought Know-

ledge too to be. I have written a very large number of treatises, many of which, thanks to Thy Providence, O Zeus, have escaped the small-pox called commentaries, in that the little ones never got possession of those works. But while always loving detail and single facts, I never lost sight of the connection of facts. As a coin, whether a penny or a sovereign, has no currency unless the image of the prince is cut out on it, even so has no fact scientific value unless the image of an underlying general principle is grafted thereon. This great truth I taught all my pupils, and I hoped that men would carefully observe it in all their studies. When then I went amongst the little ones, I expected them to do as I had taught their teachers to do. However, what I found was, O Zeus, the funniest of all things.

"On my visit to what they call Universities I happened to call, in the first place, on a professor who said he studied history. In my time I believed that history was not as suggestive of philosophical truths as is poetry. Since then I have somewhat altered my view. Naturally enough I was curious to know what my Professor of History thought of that, and I asked him to that effect. He looked at me with a singular smile and said: 'My young friend (—I had assumed the appearance of a student—), my young friend, history is neither more nor less than a science. As such it consists of a long array of specialities.' 'And which,' I asked timidly, 'is your special period?' Whereupon the professor gravely said: 'The afternoons of the year 1234 A.D.'" While everybody present in the Assembly, including even St Francis of Assisi, laughed at this point of Aristotle's narrative,

Diogenes exclaimed: "Why has the good man not selected the nights of that year? It would greatly reduce his labours."

A peal of laughter rewarded the lively remark. Aristotle resumed his tale, and said: "When the professor saw that I was a little amused at his statement, he frowned on me and exclaimed in a deep voice, if with frequent stammerings, which as I subsequently learnt is the chief attraction of their diction, 'My young friend, you must learn to understand that we modern historians have discovered a method so subtle, and so effective, that, with all deference be it said, we are in some respects stronger even than the gods. For the gods cannot change the past; but we modern historians can. We do it every day of our lives, and some of us have obtained a very remarkable skill at it.'"

At this point of Aristotle's narrative Homeric laughter seized all present, and Aristophanes patted the Stagirite on the back, saying: "Pray, consider yourself engaged. At the next performance of my best comedy you will be my protagonist." Aristotle thanked him with much grace, and continued: "I was naturally very curious to learn what my Professor of History thought of the great Greeks of my own time and of that of my ancestors. I mentioned Homer. I had barely done so but what my professor burst into a coarse and disdainful guffaw.

"'Homer?' he exclaimed; 'Homer?—but of whom do you speak? Homer is nothing more nor less than a multiple syndicate of street-ballad-singers who, by a belated process of throwing back the "reflex" of present and modern events to remote ages,

and by the well-known means of literary contamination, epical syncretism, and religious, mythopœic, and subconscious impersonation have been hashed into the appearance of one great poet.

"'Our critical methods, my young friend, are so keen that, to speak by way of simile, we are able to spot, from looking at the footprints of a man walking in the sand, what sort of buttons he wore on his cuffs.

"'Poor Cuvier—otherwise one of my revered colleagues—used to say: "Give me a tooth of an animal and I will reconstruct the rest of the animal's body." What is Cuvier's feat as compared with ours? He still wanted a tooth; he still was in need of so clumsy and palpable a thing as a tooth; perhaps a molar. We, the super-Cuviers of history, we do not want a tooth any more than toothache; we want nothing. No tooth, no footprint even, simply nothing. Is it not divine? We form, as it were, an *Ex Nihilo* Club. We have nothing, we want nothing, and yet give everything. Although we have neither leg to stand on, nor tooth to bite with, we staunchly prove that Homer was not Homer, but a lot of Homers. Is that not marvellous? But even this, my young friend, is only a trifle. We have done far greater things.

"'These ancient Greeks (quite clever fellows, I must tell you, and some of them *could* write grammatical Greek), these ancient Greeks had, amongst other remarkable men, one called Aristotle. He wrote quite a number of works; of course, not quite as many as he thought he did. For we have proved by our *Ex Nihilo* methods that much of what he thought he had written was not written by him, but

dictated. We have gone even so far (I myself, although used to our exploits, stand sometimes agape at our sagacity), we have gone so far as to prove that in the dictation of some of his writings Aristotle was repeatedly interrupted by letters or telephonic messages, which accounts for gaps and other shortcomings.

"'Well, this man Aristotle (for, we have not yet pluralised him, although I—but this would pass your horizon, my young friend)—this clever man has left us, amongst other works, one called "Politics." It is not wanting in quality, and it is said, if with certain doubts, that there are a few things to be learnt from it. It is, of course, also said that no professor has ever learnt them. But this is mere calumny. Look at their vast commentaries. Of course, how can one accept some of the glaring fallacies of Aristotle? Imagine, that man Aristotle wants us to believe that nearly all Greek states were founded, equipped with a constitution, and in a word, completely fitted out by *one* man in each case. Thus, that Sparta was founded, washed, dressed, fed, and educated by one Lycurgus. How ridiculous!

"'Having proved, as we have, that Homer's poetry, a mere book, was made by a Joint Stock Company, Unlimited, how can we admit that a big and famous state like Sparta was ordered, cut out, tailored, stuffed and set on foot by one man? Where would be Evolution? If a state like Sparta was made in the course of a few months by one man, what would Evolution do with all the many, many years and ages she has to drag along? Why, she would die with *ennui*, bored to death. Can we admit that? *Can one let Evolution die?* Is she not

a nice, handy, comely Evolution, and so useful in the household that we cannot be happy until we get her? To believe in a big, important state like Sparta having been completely established by one man is like saying that my colleague, the Professor of Zoology, taking a shilling bottle of Bovril, has reconstituted out of its contents a live ox walking stately into his lecture-room. Hah-hah-hah! Very good joke. (Secretary! Put it into my table-talk! Voltairian joke! serious, but not grave.)

"'Now, you see, my young friend, in that capital point Aristotle was most childishly mistaken; and even so in many another point. We have definitely done away with all state-founders of the ancients. Romulus is a myth; so is Theseus; so is Moses; so is Samson (not to speak of Delilah); so is everybody who pretended to have founded a city-state. Since he never existed, how could he have founded anything? Could I found a city-state? Or any state, except a certain state of mind, in which I say that no single man can found a city-state? Could I? Of course, I could not. Well then, how could Lycurgus? Was he a LL.D.? Was he a member of the British Academy? Was he a professor at Oxford? Had he written numerous letters to *The Times*? Was he subscriber to so respectable a paper as *The Spectator*? It is ridiculous to speak of such a thing. Lycurgus founding Sparta! It is too amusing for words. These are all myths. Whatever we cannot understand, we call a myth; and since we do not understand many things, we get every day a richer harvest of myths. We are full of them. We are the real living mythology.'

"To this long oration," Aristotle continued, "I

retorted as calmly as I could, that we Greeks had states totally different from those of the moderns, just as the latter had a Church system absolutely different from our religious institutions; so that if anyone had tried to persuade an Athenian of my time that a few hundred years later there would be Popes, or single men claiming and obtaining the implicit obedience of all believers in all countries, the Athenian would sooner have gone mad than believe such stuff. For, to him, as a Greek, it must have seemed hopelessly incredible that an office such as that of the universal Pope should ever be tolerated; or, in other words, that a single man should ever be given such boundless spiritual power. I said all that with much apparent deference; but my professor got more and more out of control.

"'What,' said he, 'what do you drag in Popes for? We talk of Lycurgus, not of Popes. Was Lycurgus a Christian? Let us stick to the point. The point is that Lycurgus never existed, since so many professors, who do exist beyond doubt, deny his historical existence. Now, either you deny the existence of these professors, which you can't; or you deny that of Lycurgus, which you must. Existence cannot include non-existence. For, non-existence is, is it not?—the negation of existence. And since the professors exist, their non-existence would involve us in the most exasperating contradictions with them, with ourselves, and with the daily Press. This, however, would be a disaster too awful to be seriously thought of. Consequently, Lycurgus did not exist; nor did any other state-founding personality in Greek or Roman times.

"'In fact when you come to think of it, nobody

ever existed except ourselves. Adam was not; he will be at the end of ends. The whole concept of the world is wrong as understood by the vulgar. Those old Greek and Roman heroes, like Aristomenes, Coriolanus, Cincinnatus, never existed for a day. Nor did the Doric Migration, the Twelve Tables, and lots of other so-called events. They have been invented by schoolmasters for purposes of exams. Did Draco's laws ever exist? Ridiculous. That man Aristotle speaks of them, but it is as evident as soap that he invented them for mods. or other exams. of his.

"'The vulgar constantly ask me whether or no history repeats itself. What, for goodness' sake, does that matter to me? It is sufficient for all purposes that historians repeat each other, for it is in that way that historical truth is established. Or do not the great business-princes thus establish their reputation? They go on repeating "Best furniture at Staple's," "Best furniture at Staple's," three hundred and sixty-five times a year, in three hundred and sixty-five papers a day. By repetition of the same thing they establish truth. So do we historians. That's business. What, under the circumstances, does it matter, whether history itself does or does not repeat itself?

"'One arrogant fellow who published a wretched book on "General History," thought wonders what he did not do by saying, that "*History does repeat itself in institutions, but never in events or persons.*" Can such drivel be tolerated! Why, the repetition by and through persons (read: historians) is the very soul of history. We in this country have said and written in and out of time and on every sort of

paper, that the "Decline and Fall of the Burmese Empire" is the greatest historical work ever written by a Byzantine, or a post-Byzantine. We have said it so frequently, so incessantly, that at present it is an established truth. Who would dare to say that it is not? Why, the very *Daily Nail* would consider such a person as being beneath it.

"'We real historians go for facts only. Ideas are sheer dilettantism. Give us facts, nothing but single, limited, middle-class facts. In the Republic of Letters we do not suffer any lordly ideas, no more than the idea of lords. One fact is as good as another, and far worse. Has not our greatest authority taught that the British Empire was established in and by absent-mindedness, that is, without a trace of reasoned ideas? As the British Empire, even so the British historians, and, *cela vo sang dir*, all the other historians. Mind is absent. "Mind" is a periodical; not a necessity. We solid researchers crawl from one fact to another for crawling's sake.'"

* * * * *

The gods and heroes were highly amused with the tale of Aristotle, and it was with genuine delight that they saw him resume the story of his experiences at the seats of learning. "When I left the Professor of History," continued Aristotle, "I felt somewhat heavy and dull. I could not easily persuade myself that such utter confusion should reign in the study of history after so many centuries of endless research. I hoped that the little ones

might have made more real advance in philosophy; and with a view to ascertain the fact, I entered a lecturing hall where a professor was even then holding forth on my treatise 'De Anima.' He had just published a thick book on my little treatise, although (or perhaps because? . . .) another professor, a Frenchman, had recently published a much thicker book on it.

"I listened very attentively, but could not understand a word of what he said. He treated me text-critically, philologically, hermeneutically,—everything, except understandingly. I felt that my treatise was not mine at all. It was his. At a given moment I could not help uttering aloud a sarcastic remark about the professor's explanations. Down he came on me like thunder, and with a triumphant sneer he proved to me that what I had said I had not said at all. In that I differed entirely from a great statesman of theirs, who *had* said what he had said. The professor put me under a regular examination, and after twenty minutes formally ploughed me in 'De Anima.'

"This was a novel experience for me. In the Middle Ages, it is true, I had repeatedly had the same experience, and Albertus Magnus and St Thomas Aquinas had done me the same honour. But in modern times I had not yet experienced it. The next day I called upon the professor, who lived in a beautiful house, filled with books, amongst which I saw a great number of editions of my own works.

"I asked him whether he had ever cared to study the *anima*, or what they call the psychology of animals. I added that Aristotle had evidently done

so, as his works explicitly prove, and that after he had surveyed all sorts of souls in the vegetable, animal and human kingdom, both normal and pathological, he wrote his treatise 'De Anima,' the real sense of which must escape him who has not taken such a wide range of the question. Ah—you ought to have seen the professor! He jumped from his seat, took another whisky and soda and said: 'My young friend, the first thing in science is to distinguish well. *Bene docet qui bene distinguit.* You speak of animals. What have they to do with human psychology? Their souls are studied by my colleague who goes in for comparative psychology; or rather by several of my colleagues, one of whom studies the comparative psychology of the senses; the other that of the emotions; the third that of memory; the fourth—the fifth—the sixth, etc., etc., etc.

"'I, I stick to my point. I have my speciality. You might think that my speciality is psychology, or Aristotle's psychology. Not at all. This is all too vague, too general. My speciality is quite special; a particularly singular speciality: the text of Aristotle's psychology. And even that goes too far; for what I really call my speciality is *my* version of the text which is said to have been written by Aristotle.

"'Now at last we are on firm ground. What under those conditions need I trouble about cats and rats? The latter, the rats, have, I admit, some little importance for me. They have in their time devoured parts of Aristotle's manuscripts, and I have now to reconstitute what they have swallowed. I am to them a kind of literary Beecham's Pill. But

as to cats, mules or donkeys? What have they to do with me? Can they influence my version of the text? Hardly.

"'My young friend, if Aristotle himself came to me, I should tell him: "My good man, unless you accept my version of your text, you are out of court. I am a professor, and you are only an author. Worse than that—a Greek author. As theologians fix the value and meaning of gospel-words; as the State makes a piece of worthless paper worth five pounds sterling by a mere declaration; even so we say what you Aristotle did say. What *you* said or meant is indifferent; what we say you said or meant is alone of consequence." How then could even Aristotle refute me regarding my view of his views? It is logically impossible.

"'Don't you see, this is why we have invented our beautiful system of excessive specialisation. Where each of us studies only one very small thing, there he need not fear much competition, but may hope for exclusive authority. We shall soon establish chairs for professors of philosophy, who will study, each of them, just a mere splinter of a twig of one branch of the tree of philosophy; or better still, just one leaf of such a twig of such a branch; and finally, just a dewdrop on such a leaf of such a twig of such a branch. Then we shall have completed our network of authority.

"'Our contemptible enemies say that our talk about Aristotle and Plato is like the gossip of lackeys in the pot-house about their noble masters. We know better. You are a young man. I will give you a bit of profound advice. If you want to make your way in the literary world rapidly and

with ease, hitch on your name to some universally acknowledged celebrity. Do not write on obscure, if great authors or heroes; but pick out Homer, Plato, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, or Napoleon. Write constantly on some speciality of these men; thus, on the adjectives in Homer; on the neutral article in Plato; on the conjunctions in Dante; on the plant-lore in Shakespeare; on the names of women in Goethe; or on the hats of Napoleon.

"'Your name will then incessantly be before the public together with that of Homer or Shakespeare or Napoleon. After a time, by a natural association of ideas, something of the lustre of the immortal will fall on you. Note how the most elaborate writers on, say Shakespeare, are almost invariably men of the most sincere mediocrity. They are, nevertheless, exceedingly clever tacticians. They become "authorities." We are not authorities because we are specialists; we have, on the contrary, introduced the system of specialities in order to pass for authorities. To use Plato's terms: our whole business spells *effectology*, and nothing else. Take this to heart and be successful.'

* * * * *

"On leaving the professor," Aristotle said, "I felt that I had made several steps forward in the comprehension of that system of specialisation which I heard praised and admired in all the Universities. I need not tell you, my friends, how utterly wrong that system is. As humans do not think in words, but in whole

sentences, so Nature does not act in particulars, but in wholes. The particulars are ours, not Nature's. In making them we act arbitrarily. Why should dentistry be one speciality? Why should there not be thirty-two different specialist dentists for our thirty-two teeth? All specialisation in the realm of knowledge is rank arbitrariness. Without exception, the great leading ideas in all organised thought have invariably been made by wholesale thinkers like Pythagoras, Plato, I venture to add: myself, Lionardo da Vinci, Kepler, Newton, Pascal, Leibniz, Darwin. That is precisely where humans differ from animals. All animals are the most conceited specialists."

Here Diogenes interrupted: "Does the converse hold good, O Aristotle?"

"I will leave," Aristotle replied with a smile, "the consideration of this case to your own discretion. I do repeat it, that each animal is an out-and-out specialist. It troubles about nothing else than the two or three things it takes a professional interest in. It eats, sleeps, and propagates; occasionally it adds a tightly circumscribed activity of some kind. That's why animals do not talk. It is not part of their speciality. They do not talk for the same reason that the English do not produce fine music, nor the Prussians tactful behaviour. In all these cases the interest of the specialist lies elsewhere.

"Does a modern specialist in heart-diseases study the kidneys? Does a specialist in surgery care to study the nerves? Even so an animal does not care to speak. It is a specialist; it restricts itself to its 'business,' to 'the point.' The little ones say that animals have no general ideas, and that

is why they cannot speak. But have human specialists any general ideas of anything, and yet—do they not speak? The argument is too foolish for words.

"Why, Nature created men in order to have a few *generalists*, if I may say so, amongst all the specialists called animals or plants; just as amongst men she created Homers and Platos and Galileos and Leibnizes, in order to save the rest of humans from their evil tendency to over-specialisation. It is a plan as plain as transparent glass.

"Thousands of years ago Nature found out that, with all these endless vegetal and animal specialists on hand, she would soon have to declare herself bankrupt. One specialist ignored the other; or hampered, hurt, and paralysed the other; they could not understand one another, because they had no common interest. In her predicament, Nature created human beings for the same reason that men invented the locomotive or the telegraph. She could no longer be without him. Man was, by his very needs, obliged to drop over-specialisation. He interested himself, for a variety of ends and reasons, in stones as much as in plants and animals. By exterminating some of the most damaging species of animals, he saved the life of millions of specimens of other animals that would otherwise have been killed out by ferocious specialists, such as the tiger, the leopard, and the wolf. The same he did to plants, and partly to rivers and lakes. He brought a little order into this pandemonium of specialists in Nature.

"Look at the sea. There man was unable to exert his power for order by general ideas. Look at the indescribable disorder and chaos and mon-

strosity of life and living beings in the sea. They are hideous, like an octopus; short-lived, nay, of a few minutes' duration, like the jelly-fish; fearful and yet cowardly like a shark; abominably under-sized or over-sized; incapable of any real passion, except that of eating and drinking. This liquid mass of fanatic and unsystematised specialists render the sea as inferior to the land as is Thibet to Holy Athens. People travelling in that ocean of specialists are exasperated by foul sea-sickness; and empires built on it have repeatedly been destroyed in a single week; ay, in one day.

"The dread of being swamped by specialists has driven Nature into creating the most grotesque compositions of beings half plant and half animal, or half stone and half plant; or again half male and half female; or half land-animal, half fish. Another way adopted by Nature in her attempt to obviate the ravages of specialists was by giving them exceedingly short shrift, and just a mere speck of existence; or again by forcing them to form big corporations and societies, such as forests, prairies, meadows, swarms, troupes.

"In fact Nature is a free lance fighting incessantly the evil done by the specialists. Ask Poseidon what trouble the sea gives him; ask Æolus how his life is made a misery through the mad freaks of the various specialists in winds. And what is the deep, underlying reason of all this insane race for specialism? I will tell you that in one word. It is Envy and Jealousy. In certain countries Envy and Jealousy are the inextinguishable and ubiquitous hydra of life.

"Take England. She is a democracy, if a masked

one. Hence Jealousy is the dominating trait of her citizens. Jealousy has, thousands of years ago, invented railways, telegraphs, wired and wireless ones, telephones and Röntgen-rays, and all the rest of the infernal machines whereby Space, Time, and Work is shortened, curtailed, annihilated. Jealousy has at all times sent wireless messages over and through all the houses of a town or an entire country. It has Röntgenised the most hidden interiors; and its poison runs more quickly through all the veins and nerves of men than does the electric spark.

"Look at the customs, social prejudices, or views of that nation. Over one half of them was introduced to disarm the ever-present demon of Jealousy. Why is a man a specialist? Because in that way he disarms Jealousy more quickly and more surely than by any other expedient. It gives him an air both of modesty and of strength by concentration. In reality it does neither. It is only an air. The so-called Reality consists of nothing but unrealities, of shams, and masks. A specialist is not a master of his subject; he is a master of the art than which there is no greater, the art of making other people believe that you are not what you are, but what *they* want you to be.

"Nature has a horror of specialists; and she will reveal her secrets to an insane poet rather than to a specialist. Most great inventions were made either by 'outsiders,' or by young men who had not yet had the time to harden into specialists. In specialisation there is nothing but a total misunderstanding of Nature.

"Nature acts by instantaneous correlation and co-operation of different parts to one end; and to

specialise is tantamount to taking a clock to pieces, putting them separately in a row on the table, and then expecting them to give you the exact time.

"In Nature there is no evolution, but only co-evolution; there is no differentiation but only co-differentiation. The little ones have quite overlooked all that; and that is why so many of the statements of co-differentiation in my zoology can be neither confirmed nor refuted by them. Who dare say which is a 'part' in Nature? Is the hand a 'part,' that is, something that might legitimately be told off as a speciality? Or must it be studied in connection with the arm, or with its homologies in the nether part of the body?

"In the same way: what constitutes a 'period' in history? Any division of a hundred or a thousand years by two, three, or four? Or by a division of twenty-five or thirty only? Who can tell? A man who says he is a specialist in the thirteenth century, is he not like a man who pretends that he is a specialist in respiration in the evening?

"Nature does specialise; witness her innumerable specialists. But do we know, do we possess the slightest idea as to how she does it? Can we prove why a goose has its peculiar head and not that of a stork? Evidently not, because we do not know what Nature calls a part, a speciality. She abhors specialists, just because they know so little of *her* way of specialising."

* * * * *

At this point of Aristotle's speech, Aristophanes asked for leave to protest. Having obtained it from Zeus, he commenced forthwith: "O Father of Nature and Man, I can no longer stand the invective of the Stagirite. In his time he was prudent enough to postpone his birth till after my mortal days; otherwise I should have treated him as I did Meton and Socrates, and other philosophers. But here he shall not escape me. Just imagine, this man wants to deprive creation of the best fun that is offered to the thinking beings amongst animals and humans.

"I wish he had overheard, as I have, when the other night I passed through an old forest near Darlington, a conversation between an old owl, a black woodpecker, and a badger. The owl sat, somewhat lower than usual on a birch-tree, while the woodpecker stopped his work at the bark of the groaning tree, and the badger had left his hole in order to enjoy the cool breath of the night. The owl said: 'Good-evening, Mr Woodpecker, how is business? Many worms beneath the bark?' The woodpecker replied: 'Thanks, madam, there is a slump, but one must put up with what one can get.'

"The badger then complained that he passed tedious hours in the ground, and he wished he could again see the exciting times of a few hundred thousand years ago when earthquakes and other catastrophes made existence more entertaining. 'Quite so,' said the owl, 'the forest is getting too civilised, and too calm. But you see, my friends, I have provided for much solid amusement for my old days. I used to visit a human's room, who read a great number of books. I asked him to teach me that art. I found it easy enough, only that

these humans will read in a straight line from left to right, and I am accustomed to circular looks all round.

"'When I had quite acquired the art, I read some of his books. They were all about us folk in the forest. Once I chanced upon a chapter on owls. You may easily imagine how interested I was. I had not yet read a few pages, when I was seized with such a laughter that the professor became very indignant and told me to leave him. This I did; but whenever he read his books, I read them too, perched on a tree not far from his study. I cannot tell you how amusing it was.

"'These humans tell stories about us owls, and about you, Mr Woodpecker, and Mr Badger, that would cause a sloth to dance with joy. They imagine they know how we see, how we fly, how we get our food, and how we make our abodes. As a matter of fact they have hopelessly wrong notions about all these things. They want, as my venerated father used to say, to tap the lightning off into nice little flasks, in order to study it conveniently. This they call Evolution.

"'The idea was mostly developed in England, in a country where they are proud of thinking that they always "muddle through somehow." These three words they apply to Nature, and call it Evolution. Once upon a time, they say—it does not matter whether 200,000 or 300,000 years, or perchance 645,789 years ago—there was my ancestor who, by mere accident, had an eye that enabled him to see more clearly at night than other birds did. This eye enabled him to catch more prey, thus to live longer, and to transmit his *nocturne* of an eye

to his progeny. And so by degrees we muddled into owlship.

"'Is that not charming? My father used to laugh at that idea until all the cuckoos came to inquire what illness had befallen him. He told me, that an owl's eye was in strict correlation with definite and strongly individual formations of the ears, of the neck, of the feet, and of the intestines, and that accordingly a mere accidental change in the supposed ancestor's eye was totally insufficient to account for the corresponding and correlative formations just mentioned.

"'Such correlative and simultaneous changes in various organs can be the consequences only of a violent and, as it were, fulgurous shock to the whole system of a bird. Such shocks are not a matter of slow growth. As all individual animal life at present is called into existence by one shock of fulgurant forces, even so it arose originally.

"'But the English think that Nature is by birth an Englishman who adopts new organisms as Englishmen adopt new systems of measures, calendars, inventions, or laws,—*i.e.* hundreds of years after someone else has fulgurated them out.

"'They imagine Nature to be, by rank and profession, a middle-class man and muddler; by religion, a Nonconformist; and by politics, a Liberal. However, we know better. Nature is, by rank and profession, a free lance and a genius; by religion, a Roman Catholic; and by politics, a Tory of the Tories. Now this being so, you may imagine, Mr Woodpecker and Mr Badger, what capital fun it is to read these learned lucubrations about birds and other animals as written by humans.

"'The other day I called on Master Fox in the neighbourhood. He was ill and, in order to amuse him, I told him what they say of him in human books. He fairly burst with laughter. He told me later on, that by narrating all the Don Quixote stories told of him by man, to a big brown bear, he became the court-favourite of that dreaded king of the place.

"'I have sent the swiftest bat, to whom I gave a safe conduct, to all the birds and animals of this country, to meet at a given time on one of the peaks of the Hartz Mountains, where I mean to entertain them with the stories told by specialists on each of them, on their structure, functions, and mode of life. It will be the greatest fun we have had these two thousand years. I charged the nightingales, the larks, and the mocking birds of America to open the meeting with the most wonderful chorus that they have ever sung, and I am sure that I will deserve well of the whole community of birds and other animals by offering them this the most exhilarating amusement imaginable.'

"So spake the owl. And now, O Zeus, can you really brook Aristotle's attempt to demolish and to remove men who furnish pleasure and intense amusement to so many animals holy to men and even to the gods? I cannot believe it. You know how necessary it is to provide carefully for the amusement of people. To neglect Dionysus is to court hideous punishment. If the specialists in Nature should disappear, you will, O Zeus, have endless anarchy on all sides. Birds, insects, snakes, and reptiles, lions, felines, and bears—they will all rise in bored discontent, in the waters, on land, in the

air. You will never have a free moment for calm repose.

"They will worry all the gods incessantly. They will make the most annoying conspiracies and plots and intrigues against all of us. Let us not take Aristotle seriously. He means well, and is no doubt quite right, as far as reason goes. But does reason go very far? Can he now deny the eternal rights of unreason? To remove the specialists in biology and natural history is to remove the comedy from Athens. The Athenians, in order to be ruled, must be entertained. But for me and the like of me, the Athenians could never have held out as long as they did hold out. It is even so with animals. They want their Aristophanes. They must have their specialists. Pray, Artemis, you who in your hunts over dales and mountains have heard and observed everything that concerns animals, join me in protesting against the onslaught of Aristotle on men so necessary for the well-being of animated Nature."

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Artemis Diana laughed melodiously and nodded consent. The other gods, amidst great hilarity, passed a vote against Aristotle, and the sage smilingly bowed acceptance of the censure.

"I will abide," he exclaimed, "by your decision. But, pray, let me make just one more remark which, I have no doubt, the master-minds of the unique city, over which we are hovering at present, will gladly approve. I call upon you Lionardo, Michel-

angelo, Machiavelli, and you magnificent Lorenzo, whether I am exceeding the limits of truth. I do maintain that while the little ones have, in religion, gone from Polytheism to Monotheism, they pretend that in matters of knowledge time is constantly increasing the number of gods to be worshipped.

"At present they affect to believe no longer in the numerous gods and goddesses of the Olympus, but only in one God. In point of knowledge, on the other hand, they declare that each little department thereof is endless, requiring the study and devotion of a whole lifetime, and controlled, each of them, by a god whom they call an authority. Now, nothing can be more evident than the fact that knowledge, real knowledge, becomes increasingly more stenographic in expression, and sensibly easier of acquisition. The Chinese write encyclopædias in 6000 volumes; the modern Europeans do so in twenty-four or thirty-six volumes."

Here Diogenes interrupted the Stagirite and said: "I am afraid, O Aristotle, that your argument has little real force to boast of. It does not prove at all that the Chinese have only crude, empirical, and unorganised knowledge, while the little ones in Europe have a reasoned and systematised, and hence a less cumbrous one. This is owing to quite a different cause.

"The little ones have of late invented a method of publishing encyclopædias in a manner so well adapted to tempt, threaten, bully, or wire each member of the general public into the purchase of an entire copy, that if their encyclopædias consisted of 6000 or 10,000 volumes each, the people of England, for instance, would have to conquer Norway, Sweden,

and Iceland first. Norway they would be obliged to conquer, in order to possess themselves of sufficient wood for the cases; Sweden, in order to appoint all Swedish gymnasts for the acrobatic feat of fetching a volume from the fiftieth row of a bookcase; and Iceland, in order to place excited readers of the encyclopædia in a cool place. But for this circumstance, I am sure the little ones in Europe would fain publish an encyclopædia in 15,000 volumes."

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When the laughter of the Assembly had subsided, Aristotle continued: "Nothing has struck me more forcibly in my visit to their seats of learning than this universal belief in the infinitude of each tiny department or speciality. They do most gravely assert that 'nowadays' it is impossible to embrace more than one speciality; and they look upon me or Leibniz with a certain knowing smile as if in our times all knowledge would have consisted of a few jugs full of water, whereas now it is no less than an ocean. But when you ask them the simplest questions, they are at a loss how to answer them.

"I asked one of their most famous specialists why the eyebrows of men are shorter than the moustaches. He did not know it. How could he? It takes the knowledge of at least five so-called specialities to answer such a question. I asked their most learned specialist in their language, why the English have dropped the use of 'thou,' although no other European nation has done so. He did not know it.

"They study a given subject when death has driven out all life from it. They do not trouble about language as a living organism, full of fight, of movement, of ruses, of intrigues, of sins and graces; but only of language when it lies motionless, a veritable corpse, on the table of the anatomical dissector and dictionary-fiend. They do not study a butterfly when it is in full life, flirting, pilfering, gossiping, merrymaking; but only when it is motionless, lifeless, pierced by a pin. This is how they get their specialities.

"Death indeed is the greatest of all specialisers. As soon as a man is dead, each hair or bone on or in his body takes up a separate line of decay, caring nothing for the other, full of scorn for its immediate neighbour, sulking by itself, wandering to the Styx alone and sullen.

"In England they have pushed that belief in specialities to a funereal degree. I wonder they allow a man to play one of their instruments, called the piano, with both his hands at a time. I wonder they do not insist that a given piece by Chopin be played by two men, one of whom should first play the part for the right hand, and afterwards the other man the part for the left hand. To play both parts at a time, and to have that done by one single man too,—what presumption! How superficial!

"In law they have long acted in this sense. There is one man, called the solicitor (—a very good name—), who plays the bass, or left-hand part with a vengeance, for several weeks. When that is done; when the 'hearer' or client lies prostrate on the ground from the infernal noise made by the solicitor's

music, the solicitor hands over the whole case to the other man, the barrister, who plays the most tortuous treble, in a manner likely to madden Pan himself.

"The idea, accepted by all the other nations of Europe, that the whole prejudicial business of a legal contention might very well be left to one man, to a lawyer proper,—what presumption! How superficial!

"But when you tell them that they browbeat their own principle of specialisation by taking their judges from amongst late barristers, then they wax into an august anger. Yet no other nation does that. The function of a judge is radically different from that of a barrister. After a man has been a barrister for twenty years; after all his mind has taken the creases and folds of barristerdom; after he has quite specialised himself in that particular line, he is unlikely to have the best qualities of a judge. If a barrister cannot be a solicitor; why should he be at once, and suddenly able to become judge?

"Their arguments to that effect are most amusing. They dance a real war-dance round the truth that they mean to scalp.

"The truth of course is that all the three have one and the same speciality: that of running England. That country is lawyer-ridden, as Egypt was priest-ridden, or Babylonia scribe-ridden. The English being too proud to be stingy or petty in money matters, do not mind their rulers, the solicitors-barristers-judges, because these deprive them eventually only of what the English do not hold in great esteem, small sums of money. In France, where people cling fanatically to a penny, the barristers have not been allowed to become judges,

In France specialisation in law has triumphed, where in England it has failed.

"Does that not show that specialisation is done, not in obedience to the behests of truth, but to those of interests?

"We Hellenes specialised on small city-states; we did not want to widen out indefinitely into huge states; just because we wanted to give each citizen a chance of coining out all his human capital, and not to become, like our slaves, a limited specialist. In a huge state specialisation becomes inevitable. In such states they must, more or less, sterilise the human capital of millions of citizens, just as we Hellenes sterilised the political capital of thousands of slaves.

"Specialisation *is* enslaving, if not downright slavery. It furthers truth very little; it cripples man.

"Just as a man who talks several languages well, will write his own idiom better than do his less accomplished compatriots; even so the man who keeps his mind open to more than one aspect of things, to more than one 'speciality' will be by far more efficient than his less broad-minded colleagues. Man may and shall invent, as I have long predicted it, highly specialised machines doing the work of the weaver, or the baker. But he himself must not become a machine. This is what happens 'now,' as the little ones say all over Europe and America.

"Not only have they formed states with many, many millions of people each. Worse than that, they have agglomerated the majority of these millions into a few towns of unwieldy size. In those towns specialisation is carried into every fibre of men and women. This desiccates them, disemotions them,

sterilises them. We Hellenes gladly admit that the Europeans of the last four centuries have excelled us in one art: in music. But their period for this exceeding excellence is now gone.

"By over-specialisation of thought and heart, caused chiefly by over-urbanisation, the very wells of music begin to dry up. The music of the day is hysterical, neurasthenic, and false. It is the cry, not of an aching heart, but of an aching tooth, of a gouty toe, or a rheumatic nerve. It does not weep; it coughs phthisically. It does not sigh; it sneezes. It is a blend of what we used to call Phrygian and Corybantic rhapsodies.

"And as in music, even so in character. Where each individual distorts himself or herself into a narrow speciality, there people must needs become as angular, lop-sided, and grotesque as possible. They are, when together in a room, like the words on a page of a dictionary: they have nothing to communicate to one another. There they stand, each in his cage, uncommunicative, sulky, and forbidding. One thinks in F major; the other in F sharp minor. Harmony amongst them is impossible. Every one of them is hopelessly right in every one of his ideas; and of all mental processes, that of doubt or hesitation in judgment is the last they practise.

"A specialist does not doubt. Why should he? To him the most complicated things human appear as mere specialities, that is, as mere fragments. A woman is only a specialist in parturition. A physician is only a specialist in writing Latin words on small slips of paper. A barrister is only a man who wears neither moustache nor beard. A clergyman is practically a collar buttoning behind, and supported by

a sort of man inside it. In that way everything is so simplified that no difficulty of comprehending it remains.

"All this clearly proves, O Empedocles, how right and, at the same time, how wrong you were in your view of the origin of things. Perhaps you were right in saying that the parts or organs of our bodies arose singly, or, as it were, as specialists. In times long before us there arose, as you taught, heads without necks; arms wandering alone in space; eyes, without foreheads, roaming about by themselves. But when you say that all this happened only at the beginning of things, you are, I take it, sorely mistaken. Indeed it is still going on in countries where specialism reigns supreme; at anyrate it is going on in the moral world. In such countries you still see arms wandering alone in space, or eyes roaming about without foreheads, as well as heads without brains flying about in space. Not literally, of course. But what else is a character-specialist cultivating exclusively *one* quality of the human soul than an arm wandering about alone? The little ones must come back to the Hellenic idea of seeing things as a whole, and not, as do wretched flies, as mere chips of things."

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The divine Assembly had listened deferentially to the great sage. Zeus now charged Hermes to fetch some of the masterpieces from the room called the *Tribuna* at the Uffizi in Florence. Hermes, aided by

a number of nymphs, fetched them and, placing them in the midst of the Assembly, exhibited their perfect beauty to the gods and heroes. This refreshed their souls sickened with the story of the serfdom of modern over-specialism.

THE SECOND NIGHT

DIOGENES AND PLATO ON TOLSTOY, IBSEN, SHAW, ETC.

On the second night the Olympians assembled at Pompeii. It was a balmy, starry night. The ruins of the old town, white in their marble dresses, shone with a spectral brightness against the mountains, bays, and meadows surrounding them. From Stabiæ and Gragnano opposite one could hear the pipe of Pan and the laughter of his nymphs, and on the dark water there were magic boats carrying Circe and her maids to their blue grotto in Capri. Selene sent her mildest rays over the scene, and grass and stone were as if steeped in silvery dreams. The place selected for the meeting was the amphitheatre. At a move of Zeus' right hand the seats and alleys, which had long since disappeared under the pressure of the ugly lava, rose from the ground. The orchestra and stage took up their old shape, and the whole graceful space with its incomparable view was again full of beauty, comfort, and pleasurableness. Zeus, and his wife Juno, sat down on the central seat, and around them the other gods and heroes. When everyone had found his or her seat, Zeus spake: "We have heard with much contentment the experiences of Aristotle in the country which the little ones below call England. We should now like to hear something about the theatres in that strange

land. If life itself is so uncommon and funny in that part of the non-Grecian world, their theatre, reflecting life, must be unusually entertaining. Perhaps you Aristotle, as the most renowned critic of poetry and the drama, will be good enough to give us an idea of the thing they call drama in England."

Whereupon Aristotle rose from his seat, and treated the immortals to a sight which no one had as yet enjoyed: he smiled. And smilingly he said to the almighty son of Kronos, ruler of the world: "O Zeus, your wish is a behest, and if you insist I will of course obey. But pray, kindly consider that I have, with your consent, withheld from these people, who call themselves moderns, and who might better be called *afterlings*, the second book of my 'Poetics,' in which I treat of the comedy, the farce, the burlesque, and similar *phlyakes*, as we term them. If now I should reveal my thoughts on the *phlyakes* of the English, several of their sophists, whom they call University professors, might still add to the lava which my commentators have spurted out upon my works, just as we see here the lava of angry Vesuvius cover the beauteous fields in and around Pompeii.

"May I propose the proper person to entertain us about that sort of comedy of the English which, at present, is more or less generally considered to be their most valuable dramatic output? If so," Aristotle continued at a sign from Zeus, "I propose him who over there at the right entrance of the stage lies carelessly on the ground and seems to heed us as little as in his time he heeded the Athenians and the Corinthians." Aristotle, raising his hand, pointed

to the shabby, untidy figure of Diogenes. When the gods and heroes heard the name and looked at the person of the Cynic, they all burst out in immortal laughter, and the sea, catching the gay ripple, laughed as far as Sorrento.

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Diogenes, without moving from his position, and putting one of his legs comfortably on one of the low statues of a satyr, turned his head towards Zeus and exclaimed: "Verily, I tell you, you only confirm me in my old belief, that there is nothing sadder than laughter. Why should you laugh? Are we not here to enjoy ourselves? Is not this lovely spot one where even we might and ought to feel perfectly happy? Why, then, laugh? I mean, of course, laugh at me.

"I *do* pooh-pooh all your glories. Olympus to me is not a whit more agreeble than my tub at Corinth. This is, you understand, the reason of my predilection for the English. They, alone of all these Europeans, live at least for five seconds each day in a tub.

"I also pooh-pooh your feasts, your ambrosia and nectar. For having passed a few months in a large village they call London, I have so completely lost my palate and taste, that for the next two thousand years, at anyrate, I shall not be able to distinguish nectar from stale ale, nor ambrosia from cabbage.

"Yes, I still pooh-pooh, disdain and neglect most of the things that you and your worshippers hold in

great esteem. Alcibiades raved about the beauty of women now limping about in the various cities of the barbarians, and more particularly in the towns of the English. A woman! A mere woman! What is the good of a woman unless one is rid of her? I still think what I used to teach, that between a man and a woman there is only a slight difference, one that is scarcely worth considering.

"You may laugh until Vesuvius again vomits scorn upon you, but I tell you here, at Pompeii, what I used to tell everybody at Corinth: your glories are all gone, or ought to go. Just look at Venus. There she sits displaying to eager-looking Pans and Sileni the loveliness of her head and neck and figure. But what does it mean after all? Repentance and wormwood. Look at Ares—(Mars). Does he not look as if he ruled the world? Does he not behave as if all great things were achieved through and by him? And what is it in reality? Mere butchery—cowardly butchery. You laugh; of course, you do. But I mean to show you that all that I have ever taught is nothing less than strictly true; the only truth; truth the one.

"Aristotle, in pointing me out as the person who can best tell you what this new Shavian drama of England really is; Aristotle, I say, may have acted with malice. He has, nevertheless, acted with great wisdom. I am indeed the only man out of the world (there is none in it), who does clearly and fully understand my little disciple who calls himself Bernard Shaw. Of the other friends and admirers of his, he might very well say what that great German philosopher Hegel said in his last moments: 'One man alone has understood me well,—and even

he misunderstood me entirely.' He might with reference to my Cynic lady friend Hipparchia also say: 'One man alone understood me well,—and she was a woman.'

"The fact is, Shaw, the son of Pooh-Pooh, is simply a goody disciple of my school, of the Cynics. When I was still within that mortal coil which men call skin and flesh, I did take all my sputterings and utterings very seriously, or as they say in cultured Mayfair: '*Oh grant serio.*' I really thought, as undoubtedly thinks my brave disciple in London, that my criticism of social, political, or religious things went deep into the essence of all that maintains Society, the State, and the Temples. Good old Plato, it is true, hinted at my vanity and conceit more than once, and I still feel the sting of his remark when once, soaked all through by the rain, I was surrounded by pitying folk: 'If you want to feel pity for Diogenes,' Plato said, 'then leave him alone.'

"But I then did not heed any satire directed against me, being fully occupied with satirising others all day long. However, since that time, and since I have been given a corner in the palace of the immortals, lying on one of the steps like a dog, as that Italian dauber, whom they call Raphael, painted me in his 'School of Athens' (—a fresco which might be much better had Raphael wisely chosen his age and appeared as a Præ-Raphaelite—); ever since I have learnt a great deal, not only about others, but also about myself.

"While you superior people drink nectar and partake of ambrosia, I enjoy with infinite zest the malicious pleasure of studying the capers, antics, and poses

of my posthumous selfs, the Diogeneses of that speck on the mirror of eternity which the little ones below call 'our time.' Could anything be more amusing to a Cynic of about twenty-two centuries' standing like myself, who has heard and taught all the most nerve-rasping eccentricities imaginable, than to hear Tolstoy, Shaw, Ibsen, and *tutti quanti*, teach with thunderous ponderosity, and with penurious fulguration their doctrines as the latest and hitherto unheard-of delivery of the human or inhuman mind? I beg to assure you it is excruciatingly funny. But I feel I must tell you the whole story in due order. It happened thus.

"I learnt from Momus that another posthumous self of mine had arisen and, accordingly, I forthwith repaired to the place called London. (By the way, it is a queer place. It is neither a village, nor a town; neither a country, nor a desert; it is something of all, and much of neither.) In one of the streets I saw an inscription over a door—'Agency for amusements, theatres, blue bands, green bands, etc.' I did not quite understand what blue bands had to do with amusement, but I entered.

"Behind the counter was a middle-aged man working busily at papers. I addressed him: 'Be cheerful!'

"He looked at me in a curious fashion, evidently doubting the sanity of my mind. As a matter of fact, after a little while I could not help seeing that he was right. How *could* I imagine him to be cheerful?

"I asked him for the means of seeing a theatrical piece by Shaw. He offered a ticket, and wanted to know my name. I said 'Diogenes.'

"He became impatient, and said: 'Diogenes—which? I mean, your family name?'

"'I have no other name,' I said; 'don't you know, I am Diogenes who cut Alexander the Great?'

"'Alexander the Great?' he said—'Why, I only know of a tailor, called Alexander the Great. Do you mean to tell me you cut him?'

"'No,' I said; 'I do not. I mean Alexander, King of Macedon.'

"Whereupon he contemptuously said: 'I never heard of the gentleman, and if he was a king of Macedon he has made a jolly fine mess of his country—just read about the Macedonian question in to-day's *Daily Telegraph*.' I wanted to ask him whether he was perchance Professor of History, but other people came in, and so I left.

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"On the same evening I was shown the way to a theatre, and I understood that the piece given was *Arms and the Man*. I enjoyed myself immensely.

"It is all very well to share the pleasures of Olympus with the gods. Yet, by all the Graces, whenever I hear or read reminiscences of my early youth, those unforgettable events and ideas of the time when I walked in the streets of Athens in the wake of my revered master Antisthenes, it gives me a thrill of pleasure,—I might almost say, a new shiver.

"Just fancy, here I was sitting in far-off Britannia,

over two thousand years after my mortal existence, listening to an oration—of Antisthenes, my master, which we used to call 'Kyros.' I see very well, O Ares, you remember the famous oration directed against you, against all the glories of War, because even now you frown on me, and I must ask Venus to keep you in check. I have received too many a whipping while I was at Athens and Corinth—pray let me in peace here in our temporary Olympus.

"At present, as you well know, I have quite changed my ideas about war, and much as I may have disliked you before, at present I know that Apollo, Venus, you Ares, and Dionysus keep all mortal things agoing. But let us amuse ourselves with the contemplation of an oration of Antisthenes in modern Britannic.

"Antisthenes hated war so much that he attacked the greatest and least doubted military glory of the Athenians, their victories over the Persians. He attacked it with serious arguments, he sneered at it, he tried to reduce it to a mere sham. Did Antisthenes not say, that the victory of the Athenians over the Persians at Salamis would have been something admirable, had the Persians excelled the Athenians in point of virtue and capability? For in that case the Athenians would have proved even more virtuous and more capable. However, the Persians, Antisthenes elaborately proves, were altogether inferior. Nor did they have a true king, Xerxes being a mere sham king with a high and richly jewelled cap on his head, sittting on a golden throne, like a doll. Had Xerxes not to whip his soldiers into battle? What, then, is the glory of the Athenians? None! Salamis, like all battles,

was a mere butchery, and soldiers are mere cowards, beating inferiors and running away from superiors. So far Antisthenes.

"The Britannic version of Antisthenes' sally against war, soldiers, and the whole of the military spirit, I found comical in the extreme. 'Well done' I repeatedly exclaimed within myself, when I saw the old capers of the Cynics of my mortal time brought up again for the consumption of people who had never heard of Cynics. That man Shaw out-Cynics many a Cynic. He brings upon the stage a number of persons, each of whom is, in turn, a good soul first, and then a viper; an enthusiast, and then a liar; a virtue, and then vice itself.

"Take the girl Raina. She begins by being ideal and enthusiastic; ideal, because she is pure, young, and in love with her own *fiancé*; enthusiastic, because she is in raptures over the military glory of her *fiancé*, as would be in all truth and reality a hundred out of each hundred girls in most countries of the sub-Shavian world. Not the slightest inkling or fact is indicated that she is not pure, ideal, or genuinely enthusiastic. In the next scene she is suddenly made out to be a vicious girl, a coldly calculating minx, and we are given to understand that she has had no end of general and particular adventures behind her, as she hopes to have a good many in front of her.

"Why? Why are we now to assume or believe that Raina of yesterday is not Raina of to-day? Where is the motive, I asked myself with grim satisfaction with the brave Cynicism of the author. Why? Simply, for nothing. The comedy as such does not require it; no fact alleged to have happened,

substantiates it; no situation growing out of the piece makes it a dramatic necessity. It is done simply and exclusively, in true Cynic fashion, for the sake of ridiculing a person that began by being enthusiastic for War.

"It is the old story of the ugly sorceress in the child's book of fables. 'If you praise the beauty of yonder little girl in the garden, I will transform you into a guinea-pig; and if you still continue doing so, I will make an old cock of you.' Even so Raina is changed into a viper, a liar, a dissimulator, a senseless changer of lovers, an—anything, without the slightest inner coherence, or what the philosophers call, psychological connection.

"The same old witch's wand is used, with the freedom of a clown, with regard to the *fiancé* of Raina, the young military hero. He had by a bold cavalry charge captured a battery or two of the enemy's artillery. How can he be forgiven such an execrable deed? How dare he succeed? Out with the old sauce of Antisthenes! It is, of course, exceedingly stale by this time. But the English, it appears, are so thoroughly used to stale sauces. They will not notice it at all. And thus all the threadbare arguments of Antisthenes are dished up again. I jubilated in my pride.

"The *fiancé*, Sergius, took the batteries of cannon because, we are told, by a mistake of their commander, they were — not charged. How witty! How clever! Antisthenes merely said that the Persians were much inferior to the Athenians, so the latter easily got the better of the former. But this twentieth-century dapper little Cynic goes one better. He says, as it were, the Persians had no

weapons to strike with. Who would have thought of such an ingenious satire?

"Please, Hermes (Mercury), do not interrupt me! I know very well what you mean to say. In all actions of men, victory depends more on the shortcomings of their rivals and competitors than on their own genius. It is no special feature of military victories. Of two grocers in the same street, one succeeds mainly because the other is neglectful and unbusinesslike. Of two dramatists in the same country, one succeeds because he gives the people what *they* want, and not, as does the other, what dramatic Art wants. And so forth *ad infinitum.*

"But my Cynical Shavian does not heed these inconsistencies; he knows the public will not notice them. He wants simply to ridicule War, and the whole military spirit. Accordingly out with the witch's wand, and let us change the hero first into a whimpering calf, and then suddenly into a lewd he-goat, and then, for no reason whatever, into the most mendacious magpie flying about, and finally into a little mouse caught in a trap laid by a kitchen-maid. For this is precisely what happens to the hero Sergius.

"Returning from war, he is sick of it with a nauseating sea-sickness. Why? Unknown; or, as Herbert Spencer, the next best replica of Antisthenes in Britannia, would have said, *unknowable.*

"Sergius is sentimentally idiotic about the nullity of his military glory. A few moments later he cannot resist the rustic beauties of a kitchen-maid, one minute after he had disentangled himself out of the embraces of his beautiful, young, and worshipped

fiancée. The he-goat is upon him. Why? Unknown, unknowable.

"Here in our fourth dimension we know very well (do we not, Ares?) that soldiers have done similar *escapades*? But have barristers done less? Have all solicitors proved bosom-proof? Has no dramatist ever been sorely tempted by buxomness and vigorous development of youthful flesh? One wonders.

"Why then bring up such stuff, without the slightest reason, without the slightest need, internal or external? But the soldier, do you not see, must be run down. He must be ridiculed. It must be shown that he is only a cowardly mouse caught in the trap laid for him by that very kitchen-maid whom at first he treats merely as a well-ordered mass of tempting flesh, and whom in the end he—marries.

"This trait is delicious. I have frequently been in Mysia, or what these people now call Bulgaria, where Shaw's scene is laid. The idea of a Bulgarian gentleman of the highest standing marrying a kitchen-maid gave me a fit of laughter. In eccentric England a high-born gentleman may very well marry a bar-maid. In Bulgaria a nobleman will no more marry a servant-girl than his own mother. He has known too many of them; he can study her carefully, encyclopædically, without marrying her in the least. For, *she* will never love *him*.

"Of course, my acolyte full well knows that the English are not at all conversant with any nation south of Dover Straits, and that one may tell them anything one pleases about nations other than themselves. They will believe it. And so Sergius

marries the girl by the same necessity that a mouse may be said to have married the trap into which it drops.

"Is not this fun indeed? To call marrying what simple people call getting morally insane? How clever! How bright!

"This is precisely what we Cynics used to do in ancient Greece. We turned humanity inside out, and then I walked in day-time in the streets with a lamp in my hand in search of a normal man, of a human being. If you vitriole a person's face or character first, how can you expect him to have unscathed features? But that is precisely the point with us Cynics. We take human nature; we then vitriole it out of all shape, and afterwards cry out in sheer indignation, 'How awful!' 'How absurd!' This reminds me of my lawyer pupil who once, in the defence of a fellow who had murdered his parents, pathetically exclaimed to the jury: 'And finally, gentlemen, have pity on this poor, orphaned boy!'

"Not content with Sergius, another 'type' of soldier is dragged up to the stage; a Swiss. Now I do not here mean to repeat our old Greek jokes about people similar to the Swiss, such as the Paphlagonians or Cilicians. I will only remark that the French, who have for over four hundred years had intimate knowledge of the Swiss, put the whole of Swiss character into the famous *mot*: 'Which animal resembles a human being most?' Answer: 'A Swiss.'

"From a Swiss you may expect anything. He talks three languages; all in vile German. He is to his beautiful country like a wart on a perfect face.

In the midst of paradise he is worse than a Prussian yokel born in the dreary heaths of North Germany. He is a Swiss. He has been a mercenary soldier to Popes and Lutheran princes alike. His aim was money; is money; will always be nothing but money. He sells his blood as he does the milk of his cows, by the *litre* or the *decilitre*; preferably by the latter. He likes war well enough; but he prefers truces and cessation of arms. He thinks the best part of death is the avoidance thereof. He is, when a mercenary, a military Cynic.

"I like him dearly; he does me honour. Whenever I see him on the grand staircase in the Vatican, I grin 'way down in my heart. Here is a Cynic dressed up like a parrot in gorgeous plumage. Diogenes in Rococo-dress! It is intensely amusing.

"Now this Swiss is made by Shaw a 'type' of a soldier. This is quite in accordance with the procedure of the Cynical School. First, all real soldierly qualities are vitrioled out of the man by making him a Swiss mercenary; and then he is shown up in all his callous indifference to Right, Love, or Justice; which is tantamount to saying 'a distinguished Belgian lady patrolling Piccadilly after midnight.' That Swiss mercenary proves no more against the worth of soldiers, than that Belgian woman proves anything in disgrace of the women of Belgium. If Shaw's figure proves anything, it proves the worthlessness of mercenaries in general, and of Swiss mercenaries in particular. That is, it proves something quite different from what it means to prove. This too is arch-Cynical. Why, who knows it better than I, that we Cynics were not infrequently instrumental in bringing about the very reverse of what

we were aiming at? But the more perverse, the better the fun.

"And the fun is excellent beyond words. It is, in fact, as grim as the grimmest Welshman. On my way home from the theatre I thought of it, and started laughing in the street with such violence that a policeman wanted to take me to the station. The grimness of the fun was this: inquiring about the author, I learnt that he was an Irishman. I had no sooner made sure of the truth of this statement than I could not control myself for laughter.

"An Irishman reviling war, and soldiers, and the military spirit! How unutterably grim,—how unspeakably grimy! The Irish, endowed by nature with gifts of the body as well as the mind incomparably superior to those of the English, have made the most atrocious failure of their history, of their possibilities, of their chances, for that one and only reason, that they never found means of character and endurance to fight for their rights and hopes in bitter and unrelenting wars. Not having made a single effort in any way comparable to the sustained armed resistance of the Scotch, the Dutch, the Hungarians, or the Boers, in the course of over three hundred years, they have fallen under the yoke of a nation whom they detest. This naturally demoralised them, as it demoralises a mere husband when he is yoked to a hated wife. Being demoralised, they have never, oh never, reached that balance of internal powers without which nothing great can be achieved. The English with lesser powers, being undemoralised, got their powers into far greater balance. So did the Scot through sustained, reckless fighting for their ideals. Hence the misery of the Irish, who are

like their fairies, enchanting, but fatal to themselves and to others; unbalanced, unsteady in mind and resolution to a sickening degree; fickle, and resembling altogether sweet kisses from one's lady-love intermingled with knocks in the face from one's vilest creditors.

"Their recoiling from making resolute war on the enemy being the great cause of the failure of the Irish, what can be more grimly Cynical than an Irishman's indignation at all that appertains to war? We Cynics always do that. Moderation having been the soul of all things Hellenic, we Cynics told the Greeks that the one fatal excess that man can commit is moderation. Of music we taught that its only beauties are in the pauses; and of man we held that he is perfect only by making himself into a beast.

"We taught people to contemplate everything in a convex mirror and then to fall foul of the image so distorted. This the idlers and the mob greatly admire. They deem it marvellous originality. And what can be nearer to the origin of new things than to take man and nature always in the last agonising stage of final decomposition?

"In my own dramas I did all that with a vengeance; so did Crates, my revered colleague. What was a plot to us? What does a plot matter? The other day when I sauntered through the Champs Elysées of Paris, I overheard a conversation between little girls playing at ladies. By Antisthenes, that was the real model of the plot and dialogue of all Cynic dramas!

"Said one little girl to the other: 'How are you, madame?'

"'Thanks,' said the other, 'very well. I am watching my children.'

"'How many have you?'

"'Seventy-five, please.'

"'And how old are you?'

"'Twenty years, madame.'

"'And how is your husband?'

"'*Y pensez-vous?* My husband? Fancy that! Why, I have none!'

"This is precisely the plot and dialogue in Shaw's *Candida.*

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"I enjoyed *Candida* so intensely; I could have kissed the author. How entirely like my own dramas! How closely modelled on the dialogue of the little girls!

"A husband of forty, vigorous, brave, honest, hard-working in a noble cause, loving and loved, father of two children, befriends a boy of eighteen, who is as wayward and conceited and inconsistent as only boys of eighteen can be. That boy suddenly tells the husband that he, the boy, loved Candida, the wife of the said husband. The boy, not satisfied with this amenity, becomes intolerably impudent, and the husband, acting on his immediate and just sentiment, wants to throw him out of the house.

"But this is too much of what ninety-nine out of a hundred husbands would do. So instead of kicking the impertinent lad into the street, the husband—invites him to lunch.

"I was so afraid the husband would in the end bundle the youth out of the room. To my intense

delight the author did not forget the rules of the Cynic drama, and the boy remained for lunch.

"Bravo! Bravo! I secretly hoped the husband would solemnly charge the interesting youth to fit Candida with the latest corset. To my amazement that did not take place. But yet there was some relief for me in store: the husband invites the boy to pass the evening with his wife alone.

"This is, of course, precisely what most husbands would do.

"This is what another disciple of mine in Paris (a man called Anatole, and misnamed France), did do in an even worse case. In Anatole's story, the husband arrives in the most inopportune moment that a forgetful wife can dread. He looks at the scene with much self-control, takes up the *Petit Parisien* lying on the floor, and withdraws gracefully into another room, there to make sundry reflections on the *Petit Parisien* and on the 'Petite Parisienne.'

"How classically Cynical! How Bion, Metrocles, Menippus, and all the rest of our sect would have enjoyed that! Here is a true comedy! Here is something truly realistic, and realistically true. That's why Anatole is so much admired by Englishmen. He too is, as we Cynics have been called, a philosopher of the proletariate.

"Much, O Zeus, as I enjoy the honour and pleasure of being allowed to crouch on one of the steps of your divine halls, I do also keenly appreciate the pleasure of meeting my disciples of the hour. One of these next days I will ask Momus to invite Tolstoy, Ibsen, Shaw, Anatole, and a few others to a lunch, to meet me in a Swiss hotel. Plato, you better come and listen behind a screen. You might

perhaps improve upon your *Gorgias* in which dialogue you attempt to sketch the superman and supercynic. Ibsen will stammer and jerk his best in deathly hatred of all Authority. Shaw will pinprick to death the foundations of Marriage and Family. Anatole will try to upset, by throwing little mud-pellets at them, ideal figures such as Joan of Arc" (—Diogenes had barely uttered this name, when Zeus and all the other gods rose from their seats, and bowed towards Pallas Athene, who held Joan in her holy arms—). "Tolstoy, with a penny trumpet in his toothless mouth, will bray against war; Oh, it will be glorious.

"Of course, by this time I know very well that the controlling principle of all mundane and supramundane things is Authority. As we here all bow to Zeus, so mortals must always bow to some authority. Nothing more evident can be imagined nor shown. It is the broadest result of all history, of all experience. Just because this is so, and unmistakably so, my disciples must naturally say the reverse. They do not look at facts by a microscope or a telescope; they telescope train-loads of facts into a mass of pulverised debris.

"Instead of saying that in England, through her social caste system, there are many, too many, *parvenus* or tactless upstarts, my disciples must say: 'The greatness of England is owing to her tactlessness.' This is the real merchandise which I sold at Corinth over two thousand years ago.

"Tolstoy thunders against War. I wonder he does not thunder against mothers' breasts feeding their babies. Why, War made everything that is worth having. First of all, it made Peace. With-

out war there is no peace; there is only stagnation. The greater the ideal, the greater the price we have to pay for it. And since we always crave for the sublime ideals of Liberty, Honour, Wealth, Power, Beauty, and Knowledge, we must necessarily pay the highest price for it—ourselves, our lives in war. There is no Dante without the terrible wars of the Guelfs and the Ghibellines. There could have been no ideal superman like Raphael without the counter-superman called Cesare Borgia. It is only your abominable Philistine who squeaks: 'Oh, we might have many a nice slice from the ham of Ideals without paying too dearly for it.' What do you think of that, Hercules? Did you win Hebe by avoiding conflicts and disasters?"

Hercules groaned deeply and looked first at his battered club and then at charming Hebe. The gods laughed aloud and Apollo, taking up his lyre, intoned a grand old Doric song in praise of the heroes of war who, by their valour, had prepared the *palæstra* for the heroes of thought and beauty. He was soon joined by a thousand harmonious voices from the temple of Isis, and from his own majestic sanctuary at Pompeii. Vesuvius counterpointed the lithe song with his deep bass; and, with Dionysus at the head of them, Pan and the nymphs came wafting through the air, strewing buds of melodies on to the Olympian wreaths of tones sung by Phœbus Apollo in praise of War.

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When the song had subsided, Zeus, in a voice full of serenity and benign music, addressed the gods and heroes as follows: "We are very much beholden to Diogenes for his bright and amusing story of the Cynical ants that at present run about the woods and cottages of men, biting each other and their friends. Their epigrams and other eccentric utterances can affect none of us here assembled. You very well know that I have not allowed Apollo, or Reason to reign alone and unaided by Unreason, or Dionysus. The Cynical critics of men want to bring about the Age of Reason, or as these presumptuous half-knowers call it, the Age of Science. This, I have long since laid down, shall never be.

"At the gate of the Future, at Delphi, Apollo is associated with Dionysus, and so it has been ever since I came to rule this Universe. Just as good music consists of tones and rhythms, and again of the cessation of all sound, or of measured pauses; even so my Realm consists of Reason, and of the cessation of all Reason, or of Unreason. The Cynics who ignore the latter, misjudge the former. This, I take it, is perfectly clear to all of us.

"But while we here may laugh at the bites of the Cynical ants below, we do not mean to state that in their occupation there is no point, no utility at all. These little ants may be, and undoubtedly are largely sterile mockers. Yet even I have experienced it on myself that the effects of their doings are not always sterile."

And leaning back on his chryselephantine chair, Zeus lowered his voice and said almost in a whisper: "See, friends, why do we meet here in lonely places, in a dead town, during the mysterious hours of

night? You know very well who and what has prevailed upon me to choose this temporary darkening of our blissful life."

At this moment there came from the rushes near the sea a plaintive song accompanied by a flute, and a voice of a human sobbed out the cry: "Pan, the Great Pan is dead!"

A sudden silence fell over the divine Assembly. A cloud of deep sadness seemed to hover over all.

The three Graces then betook themselves to dancing, and their beauteous movements and poses so exhilarated the Assembly, that the former serenity was soon re-established.

Zeus now turned to Plato, calling upon him to give his opinion on the Cynics. Zeus reminded Plato that hitherto the Cynics had been treated by him merely incidentally, mostly by hidden allusions to Antisthenes, or by witty remarks on Diogenes. At present Plato might help the gods to pass agreeably the rest of the beautiful night by telling them in connection and fulness what really the ultimate purport of these modern Cynics, Shavian or other is going to be. Everybody turned his or her face towards Plato, who rose from his seat, and bowing, with a smile, towards Diogenes, thus addressed Zeus and the Assembly of gods and heroes at Pompeii:

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"It is quite true that in my writings I have not devoted any explicit discussion to the views and tenets of the Cynics. They appeared to me at that

time far too grotesque to be worth more than a passing consideration. Of their dramas I had, and still have a very poor opinion. From what I hear from Diogenes, the modern imitators of Cynic dramatists are not a whit better. In addition to all their wearying eccentricities, they add the most unbearable eccentricity of all, to wit, that their dramas and comedies represent a new departure within dramatic literature.

"Shaw's dramas are no more dramas than his Swiss, in *Arms and the Man*, is a soldier; or his clergyman in *Candida* a husband, or a man. His pieces are not dramatic in the least; they do not exhibit the most elementary qualities of a comedy. For, whatever the definition of a comedy may be, one central quality can never be missing in it: the persons presented must be types of human beings.

"Shaw's persons are no humans whatever. They are *homunculi* concocted in a chemical laboratory of pseudo-science and false psychology. They crack, from time to time, brave jokes; so do clowns in a circus. That alone does not make a wax figure into a human.

"There may be very interesting comic scenes amongst bees, wasps, or beavers; but we cannot appreciate them. We can only appreciate human comicality, even when it is presented to us in the shape of dialogues between animals, as Aristophanes, the fabulists, and so many other writers have done.

"Who would care to sit through a comedy showing the comic aspects of life in a Bedlam? If madmen have humour, as undoubtedly they have, we do not want to see it on a public stage. The fact that it is a madman's humour deprives it of all humour.

"Hedda Gabler can appeal to no sound taste.

One never sees why she is so fearfully unhappy. If she is not in love with her husband, let her work in the house, in the kitchen, in the garden; let her try to be a mother; let her adopt a child if the gods deny her one of her own. Let her do something. Of course, idling all day long as she does, will in the end demoralise a poker; and far from wondering that she ends badly at the end of the last act, one only wonders that she did not do away with herself before the first scene of the first act. By doing so she would have done a great service to herself, her people, and to dramatic literature.

"Of the same kind is Raina, in *Arms and the Man*. She is a doll, but not a young girl. She has neither senses, nor sense. She is made of cardboard, and fit only to appear in a Punch and Judy show. She is, in common with most of the figures in the comedies of the modern Cynics, a mere outline drawing of a human being from whose mouth hang various slips of paper on which the author conveniently writes his *variorum* jokes and bright sayings. All these so-called dramatic pieces will be brushed away by the broom of Time, as happened to the dramas and travesties of our Greek Cynics. Life eternal is given to things only through Art, and in these writings of the Cynics, old or modern ones, there is not the faintest trace either of one of the Graces, or of one of the Muses.

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"Having said this much about Shaw's and the other modern Cynics' alleged dramatic writings, I

hasten to add, that when we come to consider the *effect* these so-called dramas have, and possibly will continue to have on the mind of the public, we are bound to speak in quite a different manner.

"I have had plenty of time, since the days of my Academy at Athens, to think out the vast difference between such works of the intellect as aim at nothing but truth and beauty, or what we might call *alethology*, on the one hand; and such works as aim at effect, or what may be generally termed as *effectology*.

"It is from this all-important point of view that I say that Tolstoy, Ibsen, Shaw and the others are, *effectologically*, just as remarkable as they are *alethologically* without much significance.

"As to the latter; as to their hitting off great or new truths; as to their being philosophers; or to put it in my terms, as to their having any *alethological* value, Diogenes has already spoken with sufficient clearness. Just consider this one point.

"Tolstoy, as well as Shaw, wants to reform the abuses of civilisation. In order to do so they combat with all their might the most powerful purifier and reformer of men,—War. Can anything be more ludicrous, and unscientific?

"Who gave the modern Germans that incomparable dash and *élan*, thanks to which they have in one generation quadrupled their commerce, doubled their population, quintupled their wealth, and ensured their supremacy on the Continent?

"Was it done by their thinkers and scholars? The greatest of these died before 1870.

"Was it done by getting into possession of the

mouth of the Rhine, or of the access to the Danish Sounds, which formerly debarred them from the sea? They do not possess the mouth of the Rhine, nor Denmark to the present day.

"Nothing has changed in the material or intellectual world making the Germany of to-day more advantageous for commerce or power than it had been formerly.

"Except the victorious wars of 1866 and of 1870.

"Can such an evident connection of fact be overlooked? And would Russia have introduced the Duma without the battle of Mukden? It is waste of time even for the immortals to press this point much longer.

"As in this case, so in nearly all the other cases, Cynics revile abuses the sole remedies for which they violently combat. In their negative attacks they brandish the keenest edges of the swords, daggers and pins of Logic; in their positive advices they browbeat every person in the household of logical thought.

"Yet, worthless, or very nearly so, as they may be as teachers of truth, they are powerful as writers of pamphlets. For this is what their literature comes to. They do not write dramas, nor novels. They can do neither the one, nor the other. But they write effective pamphlets in the apparent form of dramas and novels.

"They are pamphleteers, and not men of letters.

"In that lies their undeniably great force. They instinctively choose as eccentric, as loud, and as striking forms and draperies of ideas as possible, so

as to rouse the apathetic Philistine to an interest in what they say. They are full of absurdities; but which of us here can now after centuries of experience venture to make light of the power of the absurd?

"Error and Absurdity are so powerful, so necessary, so inevitable, that Protagoras was perhaps not quite wrong in saying that Truth herself is only a particular species of Error.

"Once, many years ago, I despised the Cynics, and my own master Socrates made light of them. But at present I think differently. When Socrates said, with subtle sarcasm, to Antisthenes: 'I see your vanity peeping out through the holes of your shabby garment,' Antisthenes might have retorted to him: 'And I, O Socrates, see through these very holes how short-sighted you are.'

"For have we not lived to see that while all revere Socrates in words, they follow the pupils of Antisthenes in deeds? The Cynics, fathered by Antisthenes, begot the Stoics; and the Stoics were the main ferment in the rise and spread of Christianity. Many of the sayings and teachings and doings of the Cynics, which we at Athens made most fun of, have long since become the sinews and fibres of Christian ideas and institutions. There is greater similarity and mental propinquity between Antisthenes or Diogenes and St Paul, than between Socrates and St Augustine of Hippo.

"I pray thee, O Zeus, to let us for a moment see this town of Pompeii as it was a day before its destruction, with all its life in the streets and the Forum, so as to give us an ocular proof of the truth of what I just now said about the Cynics and Eccen-

trics of Antiquity, and what I am going to apply to the modern Cynics, literary or other."

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Thereupon Zeus, by a wave of his hand, placed the whole Assembly in the shadow as if encircled by a vast mantle of darkness, and shed a strange and supramundane light on the town of Pompeii, which grew up at sight from the ground, putting on life and movement and beauty on all its houses, narrow streets, gardens, and squares. The ancient population filled, in ceaseless movement, every part of the charming city. Richly dressed ladies, carried in sedan-chairs by black slaves; patricians in spotless togas, followed by crowds of clients; magistrates preceded by lictors; soldiers recruited from all nations; tradesmen from every part of the Roman Empire; all these and innumerable others, visitors from the neighbouring cities, thronged the streets, and the whole population seemed to breathe nothing but joy and a sense of exuberant life.

In one of the squares there was a hilarious crowd listening, with loud derision and ironical applause, to a haggard, miserably clad, old man who, addressing them in Ionian Greek, with the strong guttural accent of the Asiatics, stood on one of the high jumping-stones of the pavement, and spoke with fanatic fervour of the nameless sinfulness of the people of Pompeii. With him were two or three other persons of the same description, joining him from time to time in his imprecations against the "doomed town."

The old man told them that their whole life was rotten through and through, a permanent lie, a contradiction to itself, a sure way to damnation. He thundered against the soldiers jeering at him in the crowd, calling them cowards, butchers, wretches, and the sinners of all sinners. He sneered at one of the priests of Isis present in the crowd, telling the people that there was only one true belief, and no other.

The more the old man talked, the more the crowd laughed at him; and when a Greek philosopher, who happened to be there, interpellated and elegantly refuted the old man in a manner approved by the rules of the prevalent school of rhetoric and dialectics, the crowd cheered the philosopher, and the more accomplished amongst the bystanders said to one another: "This old man is a mere charlatan, or an impostor; it's waste of time to take him seriously."

One man alone, in the whole crowd, a shy and retiring disciple of Apollonius of Tyana, waited until the crowd had dispersed, and then walking up to the old man, asked him what sect of Cynics he belonged to.

The old man said: "I am no Cynic; I am a Christian."

Thereupon the disciple of Apollonius took the old man's hand, pressed it with emotion, kissed him, and turning away from him, walked off, plunged in deep thought.

A minute later the supramundane light over Pompeii disappeared, and the Assembly of the gods and heroes was again in the mild rays of Selene.

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"Can anyone here," continued Plato, "deny that that crowd together with the philosopher was quite mistaken in their appreciation of the eccentric old man, and that the silent pupil of Apollonius alone was right?

"Cynics and Eccentrics have at all times been the forerunners of vast popular movements. The flagellants, the Beguins and Lollards, and countless other Cynics in the latter half of the Middle Ages preceded the Reformation.

"And was not the French Revolution, or the vastest effort at realising Ideals ever made by the little ones down here, preceded by a Cynic and his pamphlets, by Jean Jacques Rousseau?

"No Greek town would have endured within its walls a youth so completely shattered in all his moral build, as was Rousseau. He was thoroughly and hopelessly demoralised in character, *décousu* and eccentric in thought, and badly tutored in point of knowledge. The clever woman that was his protectress, mistress, and guide, and who displayed a marvellous capacity for devising jobs and an inexhaustible resourcefulness in turning things and persons to practical use, could yet never discover any usefulness in Jean Jacques.

"He wrote, later on, novels, political treatises, botanical ones, musical ones. In truth he never wrote a novel; he wrote nothing but pamphlets; stirring, wild, eccentric, enchanting pamphlets. He was not, like Beaumarchais, a pamphleteer and yet a writer of a real, and immortal comedy, itself a political pamphlet. Rousseau was a writing stump-orator doing anticipative yeoman's work for the Revolution.

"So are all the Cynics. So are Ibsen, Tolstoy; so

is Shaw. Their dramas may be, say *are* no dramas at all; their novels may be, say *are* no novels at all; their serious treatises are neither serious nor treatises; and yet they are, and always will be great *effectological* centres. They attack the whole fabric of the extant civilisation; by this one move they rally round them both the silent and the loud enemies of WHAT IS, and the eager friends of what OUGHT TO BE. Of these malcontents there always is a great number; especially in times of prolonged peace.

"A war, a real, good national war would immediately sweep away all these social malcontents.

"That's why the leaders of the Cynics, and more especially Tolstoy and Shaw, hate war. It is their mar-feast, their kill-joy; their microbes do not prosper in times of war.

"Without the fatal and all but universal peace of the period from 50 A.D. to 190 A.D., Christianity could never have made any headway in the Roman Empire; just as we got rid of our Cynics by the second Athenian Empire and its great wars.

"This, then, is in my opinion the true perspective of our modern Cynics. As literature or truth, they exhibit little of value, except that Shaw appears to me (—if a Greek may be allowed to pass judgment on such a matter—) to be the only one amongst living writers in England who has real literary splendour in his style. As men, however, exercising an effect on a possible social Revolution, these writers are of the utmost importance.

"Or to repeat it in my terms: *alethologically* nil or nearly so, *effectologically* very important or interesting; this is the true perspective of writers like Tolstoy, Shaw, and other modern Cynics.

"Their influence is not on Thought, nor on Art, but on Action.

"They may eventually, if Mars will continue trifling with wood-nymphs and other well-intended cordials, become a great power. They may beget Neo-Stoics, who may beget Neo-Christians. They themselves may then appear only as the tiny drum-pages running in front or beside the real fighters in battle. Yet their importance will be little impaired thereby.

"The Church Fathers have frequently endeavoured to honour me with the name of one of the lay protagonists of Christianity. But I know much better than that. The true protagonists were Antisthenes or Diogenes; and that is why the Roman Catholic Church has at no time countenanced me. And just as we now do not mind the jokes, burlesques and *boutades* of Diogenes any more, admitting freely, as we do, that behind them was the *aurora borealis* of a new creed, a new movement, a new world; even so we must not mind the grotesque *boutades* of Tolstoy, Ibsen, Shaw, Anatole, and other modern Cynics, for behind them is the magnetic fulguration of new electric currents in the social world.

"This, the public indistinctly feel; that's why they continue to read and criticise or revile these men. The public feels that while there may not be much in what these men yield for the present, the future, possibly, is theirs.

"The little ones below do not as yet know, that there is no future; nor that all that is or can be, has long been. Therefore they do not turn to us who might point out to them what things are

driving at; but they want the oldest things in ever new forms.

"We, however, know that *plus cela change, plus c'est la même chose*, as one of the modern Athenians in Paris has put it.

"Do not frown on me, Heraclitus; I well know that you hold the very reverse, and that you would say: '*plus c'est la même chose, plus cela change.*'

"I have gladly accepted that in my earthly time when I made a sharp distinction between phenomena and super-phenomena, or *noumena*. But I do no longer make such a distinction.

"We are above time. We Hellenes are alive to-day as we were over two thousand years ago. We still think aloud or on papyrus the most beautiful and the truest thoughts of men. Have we not but quite lately sent down for one of us to while amongst us for ever? He too began as a Cynic. But having learnt the inanity of the so-called 'future,' he rose above time and space, and soared on the wings of eagle concepts to the heights where we welcome him. He has just entered the near port in a boat rowed by the nymphs of Circe. We cannot close our meeting in a more condign fashion than by asking Hebe to offer him the goblet of welcome."

The eyes of all present turned to the shore, where a man of middle age, who had evidently regained his former vigour, walked up to the steps of the amphitheatre. When he came quite near to the Assembly, Diogenes exclaimed: "Hail to thee, Frederick Nietzsche!"

THE THIRD NIGHT

ALCIBIADES ON WOMEN IN ENGLAND

In the third night the gods and heroes assembled at Venice. Where the Canal Grande almost disappears in the sea, there on mystic gondolas the divine Assembly met in the town of Love and Passion, at the whilom centre of Power wedded to Beauty. It was a starlit night of incomparable charm. The Canal Grande, with its majestic silence; the dark yet clearly outlined Palaces surrounding the Canal like beautiful women forming a procession in honour of a triumphant hero; the grave spires of hundreds of churches standing like huge sentinels of the town of millions of secrets never revealed, and vainly searched for in her vast archives; and last not least the invisible Past hovering sensibly over every stone of the unique city; all this contributed ever new charms to the meeting of the gods and heroes at Venice.

Zeus, not unforgetful of the Eternal Feminine, asked Alcibiades to entertain the Assembly with his adventures amongst the women of England. Alcibiades thereupon rose and spake as follows: "O Zeus and the other gods and heroes, I am still too much under the fascination of the women with whom I have spent the last twelve months, to be in a position to tell you with becoming calmness what kind of beings they are. In my time I knew

the women of over a dozen Greek states, and many a woman of the Barbarians. Yet not one of them was remotely similar to the women of England. I will presently relate what I observed of the beauty of these northern women.

"But first of all, it seems to me, I had better dwell upon one particular type of womanhood which I have never met before except when once, eight hundred years ago, I travelled in company with Abelard through a few towns of Mediæval France. That type is what in England they call the middle-class woman. She is not always beautiful, and yet might be so frequently, were her features not spoilt by her soul. She is the most bigoted, the most prejudiced, and most intolerant piece of perverted humanity that can be imagined.

"The first time I met her I asked her how she felt that day. To this she replied, 'Sir-r-r!' with flashing eyes and sinking cheeks. When I then added: 'I hope, madame, you are well?'—she looked at me even more fiercely and uttered: 'Sir-r-r!' Being quite unaware of the reason of her indignation, I begged to assure her that it gave me great pleasure to meet her. Thereupon she got up from her seat and exclaimed in a most tragic manner: 'Si-r-r-r, you are *no* gentleman!!'

"Now, I have been shown out, in my time, from more than one lady's room; but there always was some acceptable reason for it. In this case I could not so much as surmise what crime I had committed. On asking one of my English friends, I learnt that I ought to have commenced the conversation with remarks on the weather. Unless conversation is commenced in that way it will never commend itself

to that class of women in England. It is undoubtedly for that reason, Zeus, that you have given England four different seasons indeed, but all in the course of one and the same day. But for this meteorological fact, conversation with middle-class people would have become impossible.

"The women of that class have an incessant itch for indignation; unless they feel shocked at least ten times a day, they cannot live. Accordingly, everything shocks them; they are afflicted with permanent *shockingitis*.

"Tell her that it is two o'clock P.M., and she will be shocked. Tell her you made a mistake, and that it was only half-past one o'clock, and she will be even more shocked. Tell her Adam was the first man, and she will scream with indignation; tell her she had only one mother, and she will send for the police. The experience of over two thousand years amongst all the nations in and out of Europe has not enabled me to find a topic, nor the manner of conversation agreeable or acceptable to an English middle-class woman.

"At first I thought that she was as puritanic in her virtue as she was rigid and forbidding in appearance. One of them was unusually pretty and I attempted to please her. My efforts were in vain, until I found out that she took me for a Greek from Soho Square, which in London is something like the poor quarters of our Piræus. She had never heard of Athens or of ancient history, and she believed that Joan of Arc was the daughter of Noah.

"When I saw that, I dropped occasionally the remark that my uncle was Lord Pericles, and that the King of Sparta had reasons to hide from me

his wife. This did it at once. She changed completely. Everything I said was 'interesting.' When I said, 'Wet to-day,' she swore that it was a capital joke. She admired my very gloves. She never tired asking me questions about the 'swell set.' I told her all that I did not know. The least man of my acquaintance was a lord; my friends were all viscounts and marquesses; my dog was the son of a dog in the King's kennels; my motor was one in which three earls and their wives had broken eleven legs of theirs.

"These broken legs brought me very much nearer to my goal; and when finally I apprised her that I had hopelessly spoilt my digestion at the wedding meal of the Duke of D'Ontexist, she implored me not to trifle any longer with her feelings. I stopped trifling.

"This experience," Alcibiades continued, "did much to enlighten me about what was behind all that forbidding exterior of the middle-class woman. I discovered Eve in the Mediæval form of womanhood. I was reminded of the Spartan women who, at the first meeting, seemed so proud, unapproachable and Amazonian; at the second meeting they had lost some of their prohibitive temper; and at the third meeting they proved to be women, and nothing but women after all.

"Honestly, I preferred the English middle-class woman in her first stage. It suited the somewhat rigid style of her beauty much better. In the last or sentimental stage she was much less interesting. Her tenderness was flabby or childish. Then she cried after every *rendez-vous*. That annoyed me considerably. One evening I could not help ask-

ing her whether she did not feel like sending five pounds of conscience-money to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. She drew the line on that, and cried more profusely. Whereupon I proposed to send fifty pounds of conscience-money and to be released of any further tears. This seemed to pacify and to console her; and thus we parted.

* * * * *

"A few days after I had been relieved of my first lady friend in England," Alcibiades continued, "I made the acquaintance of a girl whose age I was unable to determine. She said she was twenty-nine years old. However, I soon found that all unmarried girls *d'un certain âge* in England are exactly twenty-nine years old.

"She was not without certain attractions. She had read much, spoke fluently, had beautiful auburn hair and white arms. In her technical terms, which she used very frequently, she was not very felicitous. She repeatedly mixed up bigotry with bigamy, or with trigonometry. My presence did not seem to affect her very much, and after two or three calls I discovered that she was in a chronic state of rebellion against society and law at large.

"She held that women were in absolute serfdom to men, and that unless women were given the most valuable of rights, that is, the suffrage, neither women nor men could render the commonwealth what it ought to be. I told her that shortly after my disappearance from the political stage of Athens,

about twenty-three centuries ago, the women of that town, together with those of other towns, clamoured for the same object. 'What?' she exclaimed. 'Do you mean to say that suffragettes were already known in those olden times?' I assured her that all that she had told me about the aims and arguments of herself and her friends was as old as the comedies of Aristophanes. That seemed to have a strange effect upon her. I noticed that what she believed to be the novelty of the movement constituted really its greatest charm for her. She had thought that suffragettism was the very latest fashion, in every way brand new.

"But after a time she recovered and said: 'Very well; if our objects and aims are as old as all that, they are sure to be even more solidly founded in reason than I thought they were.'

"Reason, Right, Equity, and Fairness were her stock-in-trade. She was the daughter of Reason; the wife of Right; the mother of Equity; and the mother-in-law of Fairness. It was in vain that I told her that this world was not held together by Reason or Right alone, but also by Unreason and Wrongs. She scoffed at my remarks, and asked me to come to one of her speeches in Hyde Park on one of the next Sundays. I came. There was a huge crowd, counting by the hundreds of thousands. My lady friend stood on a waggon in the midst of about half-a-dozen other women, who all had preferred single blessedness to coupled bliss. They were, of course, each of them twenty-nine years old; and yet their accumulated ages brought one comfortably back to the times of Queen Elizabeth. When my friend's turn came, she addressed the crowd as follows:

"'Men and women. Excuse me, ladies, beginning my speech in that way. It is mere custom, the behests of which I obey. In my opinion there are no men in this country. There are only cowards and their wives. Who but a coward would refuse a woman the most elementary right of citizenship? Who but a wretch and a dastardly runaway would deny women a right which is given to the scum of men, provided they pay a ridiculous sum in yearly taxes? There are no men in this country.' (A voice from the people: 'None for you, m'um, evidently!')

"'I repeat it to you: there are no men. I will repeat it again. I can never repeat it too frequently. Or, do you call a person a man who is none? The first and chief characteristic of a true man is his love of justice. It is so completely and exclusively his, that we women do not in the least pretend to share in this his principal privilege.

"'But can the present so-called men be called just? Is it justice to deny justice to more than one half of the nation, to the women? Let us women have the suffrage, so that men, by thus doing justice, shall become true men worthy of *their* suffrage. For are not all their reasonings against our wishes void of any force?

"'They say that the suffrage of women, by dragging them too much into the political arena, would defeminise them. Pray look at us here assembled. Are we unwomanly? Do we look as if we had lost any of that down which hovers over the soul of domesticated women as does the nap on a peach?' (Stormy applause.) 'Thanks, many thanks. I knew you would not think so.

"'No, it is indeed absurd to assume that a waggon can change a woman into a dragon. Am I changed by entering a 'bus? Or by mounting a taxi? Why, then, should I be changed by standing on a waggon? I am no more changed by it, than the waggon is changed by me.' (A voice: 'Good old waggon!')

"'We want to have a share in legislation. There are a hundred subjects regarding which we are better informed than are men. Take food-adulteration—who knows more about it than we do? Take intemperance—who drinks more in secret than we do? Take the law of libel and slander—who libels and slanders more than we do? Who can possibly possess more experience about it?

"'Look at history. Repeatedly there have been periods when a number of queens and empresses proved to be more efficient than men. Politics, especially foreign policy, spells simply lies and dissimulation. Who can do that better than ourselves? People say that if we women get the suffrage, the House of Commons would soon be filled with mere women. Let us grant that, for argument's sake. Would the difference be really so great? Are there not women in trousers? And are there not more trousers than men?

"'Nowadays most men cry themselves hoarse over Peace, Arbitration, International Good Will, and similar nostrums. Could we women not do that too? I ask you men present, could we not do that as well? The men of this country think that they will bring about the millennium by preaching and spreading teetotalism, Christian Science, vegetarianism, or simple lifeism. How ridiculous and petty.

"'Look at the "isms" we propose to preach and spread: (1) Anti-corsetism; (2) Anti-skirtism; (3) Anti-bonnetism; (4) Anti-gloveism; (5) Anti-necktieism; (6) Anti-cigarettism; and finally (7) *Anti-antiism.*

"'On these seven hills of antis, or if you prefer it, on these seven ant-hills, which are in reality anti-ills, we shall build our New Rome, the rummiest Rome that ever was, and more eternal than the town of the Cæsars and the Popes. Give us the suffrage! Do you not see how serious we are about it? We know very well that the various classes of men obtained the suffrage only by means of great fights in which, in some countries, untold thousands of men were killed. But can you seriously think of putting us women to similar straits?

"'Evidently, what men had to fight for in bitter earnest, ought to be given to women in jest as a mere gift. Do give us the suffrage! Do not be pedantic nor naughty. We mean it very seriously; therefore give it to us as a joke, by sheer politeness, and as a matter of good manners.

"'Come, my male friends, be good boys; let me brush your coat, fix the necktie in the proper shape and pour a little brilliantine on your moustaches. There! That's a nice little boy. And now open the safe of the nation and give us quick the right of rights, the might of mights, the very thing that you men have been fighting for ever since Magna Charta in 1215, give us the suffrage as an incidental free gift.

"'If you do so, we will pass a law that all barbers' shops shall be in the soft, pleasant hands of young she-barbers. Think of the downy satisfaction that this will give you! Think of the placid snoozes in

a barber's chair when your face is soaped, shaven and sponged by mellow hands! Is it not a dear little enjoyment? Now, look here my male friends, this and similar boons we shall shower upon you, provided you give us the suffrage.

"'Nay, we shall before everything else (provided we have the suffrage!) pass a law *abolishing breach-of-promise cases.*'

"(Endless hurrahs from all sides—Band—Fireworks—St Vitus' Dances, until the whole immense crowd breaks out in a song 'She is a jolly good maiden, etc.')

"'Thanks, you are very kind. Yes, we mean to abolish breach-of-promise cases. Consider what advantages that would imply for you. A man will be able to flirt round five different corners at a time, without risking anything. He will be able to practise letter-writing in all the colours of the rainbow, without in the least jeopardising his situation, purse or expectations. He will be in a position to amuse himself thoroughly, freely, everywhere, and at any time. What makes you men so stiff, so tongue-tied, so pokery, but the dread of a breach-of-promise case. Once that dread is removed by the abolition of such cases, you will be amiable, great orators, full of charming *abandon*, and too lovely for words. As a natural consequence, women will be more in love with you than ever before. Your conquests in Sexland will be countless. You will be like Alcibiades, — irresistible, universally victorious. Now, could we offer you anything more tempting?

"'I know, of course, that outwardly you affect to be no ladies' men. But pray, *entre nous*, are you not

in reality just the reverse? Man *is* polygamous. We women do not in the least care for men, and if all my female contemporaries should die out, leaving me alone in the world with 600,000,000 men, I should myself speedily die with boredom. What are men here for but as mere cards in our game of one woman against the other? If I cannot martyrise a little the heart of my female friend by alienating her man from her, what earthly use has her man for me?

"'But you men, you are quite different. You do wish that all the women, at any rate all the young and beautiful women, shall be at your order. This of course we cannot legislate for you. But we can do the next best thing: we can abolish the chief obstacle in your way: the breach-of-promise cases. This we promise to do, provided you give us the suffrage. You are, however, much mistaken if you think that that is all we have in store for you. Far from it.

"'If you give us the franchise, we pledge ourselves *never to publish a novel or a drama.*'

"(Applause like an earthquake—men embrace one another—elderly gentlemen cry with joy—a clergyman calls upon people to pray—in the skies a rainbow appears.)

"'Yes, although with a breaking heart, yet we will make this immense sacrifice on the altar of our patriotism: we will henceforth not publish any novels. I cannot say that we will not write any. This would be more than I or any other woman could promise. We must write novels. We are subject to a writing itch that is quite beyond our control. The less a woman has to say the more

she will write. She must write; she must write novels.

"'We write, we publish at present about five novels a day. If you give us the suffrage, we pledge ourselves not to publish a single novel.'

"(Universal cry: 'Give them the suffrage, for God's sake!')

"'And if you do not give us the suffrage, we shall publish ten novels a day.'

"(Fearful uproar—fierce cries for the police—twenty publishers present are mobbed—Miss Cora Morelli present is in imminent danger of life.)

"'Did I say, ten? What I meant to say is, that if you do not give us the franchise, we shall publish fifteen novels a day.'

"(Revolution — pistol shots — the fire-brigade comes.)

"'Twenty—thirty—forty novels a day.'

"(The Big Ben is howling—the Thames river floods Middlesex—the House of Commons suspends the Habeas Corpus Act.)

"'Or even ten novels every hour.'

"(The Albert Memorial leaves its place and takes refuge in the Imperial Institute—the crowd, in despair, falls on their knees and implores the speaker to have mercy on them—they promise the suffrage, at once, or somewhat before that.)

"'There! I told you, we do mean what we mean, and we have all sorts of means of making you mean what we mean. It is therefore understood that you will give us the franchise, and we shall stop publishing novels. But should you change your mind and go back on your present promises, then I must warn you that we have in store even more drastic means

of forcing your hands. You must not in the least believe that the pressure we can bring to bear upon you is exhausted with the devices just enumerated. There are other devices. But for evident reasons of modesty I prefer calling upon my motherly guide, Mrs Pancake, to tell you more about them.'

* * * * *

"With that my tender friend retired, and up got a middle-aged woman with hard features and much flabby flesh. She was received with mournful silence. She began in a strident voice, which she accentuated by angular gestures cutting segments out of the air. She said:

"'You have, ladies and gentlemen, heard some of the disadvantages that will inevitably be entailed upon you by not granting us what Justice, Equity and our Costume render a demand that none but barbarians can refuse. I am now going to give you just an inkling of what will befall you should you pertinaciously persist in your obdurate refusal of the franchise to women. We women have made up our minds to the exclusion of any imaginable hesitation, change, or vacillation. We shall be firm and unshakable.

"'We have done everything that could be done by way of persuading you. We have published innumerable pamphlets; we have trodden countless streets in countless processions; we have been wearing innumerable badges and carrying thousands of flags and standards; we have screamed, pushed, rowdied, boxed, scuffled, gnashed our teeth (even

such as were not originally made for that purpose), and suffered our skirts to be torn to shreds; we have petitioned, waylaid, interpellated, ambushed, bullied and memorialised all the ministers, all the editors, all the clergymen, all the press-men; we have suffered imprisonment, fines, scorn, ridicule; we have done, with the exception of actual fighting, everything that men have done for the conquest of the suffrage.

"'Should all these immense sacrifices not avail us any; should it all be in vain; then we the women of this country, and I doubt not those of the other countries too, will, as a last resort, take refuge in the oldest and most powerful ally of our sex. Eternal Time has two constituents: Day and Night. The Day is man's. The Night is ours.'

"(Deadly silence—men begin looking very serious.)

"'The Night, I repeat it in the sternest manner possible, the Night is ours. We grant, indeed, that sixteen hours are man's; but the remaining eight are ours. The stars and the moon; the darkness and the dream—they are all ours. Should you men persist in refusing us the franchise, you will wake in vain for the moon and the stars and the dream. You will see stars indeed, but other ones than you expect. We shall be inexorable. No moon any more for you; neither cresent, half nor full moon; neither stars nor milky-way; neither galaxy nor gallantry.'

"(A salvationist: 'Let us pray!'—A soldier: 'Hope, m'um, that Saturdays will be off-days?'—Solicitors, teetotallers, and three editors of Zola's collected works: 'Disgraceful! shocking!'—A scholar: 'Madame, that's a chestnut, Aristophanes

has long proposed that!'—General uproar—a band of nuns from Piccadilly hurrah the proposal and raise prices of tickets—Scotland Yard smiles—the *Daily Nail* kodaks everybody and interviews Mrs Pancake on the spot—Mrs Guard, the famous writer, at once founds a counter-League, with the motto 'Astronomy for the people—Stars and Stripes free—the United Gates of Love'—the *Daily Crony* has an attack of moral appendicitis.)

* * * * *

"I wish," continued Alcibiades, amidst the laughter of the immortals, "Aristophanes had been present. I assure you that all that he said in his comedies called *Ecclesiazusae* and *Lysistrata* pale beside the tumultuous scenes caused by the peroration of Mrs Pancake. Her threat was in such drastic contrast to the stars and moon she personally could exhibit to the desires of men, that the comic effect of it became at times almost unbearable.

"While the pandemonium was at its height a stentorian voice invited all present to another platform where another woman was holding forth on Free Love and Free Marriage. I forthwith repaired to the place, and heard what was in every way a most interesting speech delivered by a woman who consisted of a ton of bones and an ounce of flesh. She was between forty and seventy-nine. She talked in a tone of conviction which seemed to come from every corner of her personal masonry. Her gestures were, if I may say so, as strident as her voice, which came

out with a peculiar gust of pectoral wind, unimpeded, as it was, by the fence of too numerous teeth. She said:

"'Gentlemen, all that you have heard over there from the platforms of the suffragettes is, to put it mildly, the merest rubbish. We women do not want the suffrage. What we want is quite another thing. All our misery since the days of Eve comes from one silly, absurd, and criminal institution, and from that alone. Abolish that cesspool of depravity; that hotbed of social gangrene; that degradation of men and women; and we shall be all happy and contented for ever.

"'That institution; that cancerous hotbed; that degradation is: *Marriage.* As long as we shall endure this scandalous bondage and prostitution of the most sacred sentiments and desires of human beings, even so long will our social wretchedness last.

"'Abolish marriage.

"'It has neither sense, nor object, nor right; it is the most hapless aberration of humanity. How can you uphold such a monstrous thing?

"'Just consider: I do not know, and do not care to know what other nations are like; I only care for my great nation, for England, for Englishmen. Now, can anyone here present (or here absent, for the matter of that), seriously contend that an Englishman is by nature or education fit for marriage? Why, not one in ten thousand has the slightest aptitude for it.

"'An Englishman is an island, a solitary worm, morally a hermit, socially a bear, humanly a Cyclop. He hates company, including his own. The idea

that any person should intrude upon his hallowed circles for more than a few minutes is revolting to him. When he is ill he suffers most from the inquiries of friends about his condition. When he is successful he is too proud to stoop to talking with anyone under the rank of a lord. When he is unsuccessful, he takes it for granted that nobody desires to speak to him. He builds his house after his own character: rooms do not communicate. He chooses his friends among people that talk as little as possible and call on him once a year. Any remark about his person he resents most bitterly. Tell him, ever so mildly, that the colour of his necktie is cryingly out of harmony with the colour of his waistcoat, and he will hate you for three years.

"'And you mean to tell me, gentlemen, that such a creature is fit for marriage? That is, fit for a condition of things in which a person, other than himself, claims the right to be in the same room with him at any given hour of the day or the night; to pass remarks on his necktie, or his cuffs, or even on his tobacco; to talk, ay, to talk to him for an hour, to twit him, or chaff him—good heavens, one might just as well think of asking the Archbishop of Canterbury by telephone whether he would not come to the next bar round the corner for a glass of Bass.

"'And as to other still more personal claims of tenderness and intimacy on the part of the wife, such as embraces and kisses, one shudders to think how any woman may ever hope to attempt doing them without imminent risk to her life.

"'Fancy a wife trying to kiss her legal husband! He, prouder of his collar and cuffs than of his banking account, to stand calmly and willingly an assault

on the immaculate correctness of the said collar and cuffs!

"'It passes human comprehension. The mere idea thereof is unthinkable.

"'Perhaps in the first few weeks of married life. But after six months; after a year, or two—by what stretch of imagination shall one reach the possibility of such an event? After six months, he is indifferent to the entire astronomy of his wife; after a year or so, he hates her. It is not so much that he wants another woman, or another man's wife, or another wife's man; what he wants is to be left alone.

"'He has long since shaken off the State, the Church, the Army, and, politically, the Nobility. Nothing can be more evident than that he wants to shake off the last of the old shackles: Marriage. His motive is: shekels, but no shackles.

"'Some incomprehensibly modest people have proposed marriage to last ten years only. It appears, they contend, that the critical period of the modern marriage shows itself at the end of ten years. The scandals that are usually cropping up at the end of that period, they say, might very well be avoided by terminating marriage legally at the end of the tenth year. People proposing such stuff clearly manifest their utter inability to see through the true character of modern marriage.

"'If marriages were to last only ten years, then be sure that the said critical period with its inevitable scandals would set in at the end of the fifth year. The cause, the real cause of these scandals is not in the length of time, but in the very nature of marriage. If this iniquitous and barbarous contract were to last only for five years, then its critical period and its

scandals would appear at the end of two years. And by a parity of reasoning, if marriage were to last one year only, it would by its inherent vice come to grief at the end of six months.

"'The only cure for marriage is to abolish it. Does marriage not demand the very quality that not one English person in a hundred thousand possesses: yieldingness? Or can anyone deny that no English person has ever really meant to admit that he or she was wrong?

"'They are all of them infallible. People write such a lot about the hatred of Popery in English history. What nonsense. English people do not hate Popery; they despise the idea that there should be only one infallible Pope, whereas they know that in England alone there are at present over thirty millions of such infallibles. This being so, how can marriage be a success?

"'Or take it,' the Free Love lady continued, 'from another standpoint. Most Englishmen enter married life with little if any experience of womanhood. Only the other day a young man of twenty-five, who was just about to marry, asked in my presence whether it was likely that a woman gave birth to one child early in the month of May, and to the other in the following month of June? He thought that *The Times* instalment system applied to all good things.

"'Other young men inquire seriously about the strategy of marriage, and the famous song in the *Belle of New York*, in which the girl asks her *fiancé* "When we are married what will you do?" was possible only in countries of Anglo-Saxon stock. In Latin countries the operette could not have been

finished in one evening on account of the interminable laughter of the public. In London nobody turned a hair, as they say. Half of the men present had, in their time, asked the same question of themselves or of their doctors.

"'Now if there is one thing more certain than another in the whole matter of marriage it is this, that the inexperienced *fiancé* generally makes the worst husband. Being familiar only with the ways and manners of men, he misunderstands, misconstrues, and misjudges most of the actions or words of his young wife. He is positively shocked at her impetuous tenderness, and takes many a manifestation of her love for him as mere base flattery or as hypocrisy. Not infrequently he ceases treating her as his wife, and goes on living with her as his sister; and, since the wife, more loyal to nature, rarely omits recouping herself, her husband acts the part of certain gentlemen of Constantinople. It is thus that the famous *ménage à trois* does not, properly speaking, exist in England. In England it is always a *ménage à deux*.

"'If, then, instead of continuing marriage; if, instead of maintaining an institution so absurd and so contrary to the nature of an Englishman, we dropped it altogether; if, instead of compulsory wedding ceremonies, we introduced that most sacred of all things: FREE LOVE; the advantages accruing to the nation as a whole, and to each person constituting that nation, would be immense.

"'Free Love, ay: that is the only solution. Nature knows what she is after. The blue-eyed crave the black-eyed ones; the fair-haired desire the dark-haired; the tall ones the small; the thin ones

the thick; the unlettered ones the lettered unfettered ones. This is Nature.

"'If these affinities are given free scope, the result will be a nation of giants and heroes. Affinities produce Infinities. Free Trade in wedlock is the great panacea. Since the only justifiable ground for marriage is—the child, how dare one marry anyone else than the person with whom he or she is most likely to have the finest babe? That person is clearly indicated by Nature. How, then, can Society, Law, or the Church claim the right to interfere in the choice?

"'I know that many of you will say: "Oh, if men should take their wives only from Free Love, they would take a different one every quarter." But if you come to think of it, it is not so at all. If men took their wives out of Free Love, they could not so much as think of taking another wife every quarter. For, which other wife could they take? There would be none left for them, since all the other women would, by the hypothesis, long have been taken up by *their* Free Lovers. Moreover, if a man takes a wife out of Free Love, he sticks to her just because he loves her. Had he not loved her, he would not have taken her; and if he should cease loving her, he would find no other woman to join him, owing to his proved fickleness.

"'Last, not least, women and men would form elaborate societies for the prevention of frivolous breaches of faith. At present no woman has a serious interest in watching another woman's man. It would be quite different in Free-Love-Land. The unofficial supervision and control of men and women would be as rigorous as in monastic orders. As a

man will pay off debts contracted at a card-table with infinitely greater anxiety than any ordinary debt of his to a tailor or a grocer, just because such gambling debts are not actionable; even so conjugal debts would, in Free-Love-Land, be discharged with a punctuality that now is practically unknown.

"'The commonplace assertion that legal marriage preserves men and women in a virtuous life has been refuted these six thousand years. To the present day one is not able to deny the truth of what once a Turkish woman replied to a Christian lady. The latter asked the Oriental: "How can you tolerate the fact that your husband has at the same time and in the same house three other wives of his?" The Turkish lady replied: "Please, do not excite yourself unduly. The only difference between me and you is this, that I know the names of my rivals, and you do not."

"'In Free-Love-Land alone is there virtue. Men and women select freely, obeying only the dictates of infallible Nature. The result is order, health, joy, and efficiency. How can any person of sense believe in the present marriage systems, when one considers the countless lives of old maids sacrificed to the Moloch of modern legal monogamy?

"'In England there are about four times more old maids than in any other country; except in New England, in the United States, where every second woman is born an old maid. Has anybody ever seriously pondered over the great danger to Society and State implied in an excessive number of old maids? I leave it to you, and I dare say to everyone of you who has, no doubt, bitterly suffered at the hands of some one old maid in his or her family.

"'Old maids are either angels of goodness, or devils in human form; the real proportion of either must be left to the Lord Chancellor to decide. But who, or what produces old maids? Our legal monogamy. Give us Free Love, and you shall have heard the last word of old maids. Refuse Free Love, and we shall have to form our old maids into regiments and send them against the Germans. Plato said that the unsatisfied womb of a woman wanders about in all her body like a ravenous animal and devours everything on his path. Our present marriage system makes more victims than victors.'

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"The good bag of bones wanted to continue in the same strain, but was stopped by a young policeman who threatened to take her into custody unless she discontinued her oratory. She threatened to love him freely; whereupon he ran away as speedily as he could manage, but was at once followed by the valiant she-orator, who nearly overtook him, crying all the time 'I love you freely'—'I love you freely.' The whole crowd followed, howling, screaming, laughing, and singing songs of Free Love. So ended the discourse on Free Love.

* * * * *

"A few weeks later," continued Alcibiades, "I made the acquaintance of what they call a society

lady. She was, of course, a specialist. She had found out that her physical attractions were of a kind to show off best at the moment of entering a crowded room. She was, to use the phraseology of the *chef*, an *entrée* beauty. Her name was Entréa. At the moment she entered a *salon*, she gave, just for a few minutes, the impression of being strikingly handsome. She walked well, and the upper part of her head, her hair, forehead, and eyes were very pretty. She knew that on entering a room, the upper part of the head is precisely the one object of general attention. This she utilised in the most methodic manner. She entered with an innocent smile and lustrous eyes. The effect was decidedly pretty.

"In order to heighten it she always came late. Her cheeks, which were ugly; her shoulders, which were uglier; her arms, which were still uglier, were all cleverly disguised or made to appear secondary, and as if dominated by her big eyes. She was very successful. Most men considered her beautiful; and women were happy that her principal effect did not last very long. She knew some fifteen phrases by heart, which were meant to meet the conversation of the fifteen different species into which she had, for daily use, divided the different men she met in society. Each of these phrases gave her the appearance of much *esprit* and of an intelligent interest in the subject. She did not understand them at all; but she never mixed them up, thanks to her instinct, which was infallible.

"The last time she had done or said anything spontaneously or naively was on the day she left her nursery. Ever since she was the mere manager of

her words and acts. In everything there was a cool intention. As a matter of fact she was meant by Nature to be a salesgirl at Whiteley's. Failing this, she sold her presence, her smiles, her manners to the best social advantage. A rabid materialist, she always pretended to live for nothing but ideals. Sickened by music, she always gave herself out to be an enthusiast for Wagner. Like many women that have no natural talent for intellectual pursuits, she was most eager to read serious books, to attend serious lectures, and to engage a conversation on philosophy.

"I met her in my quality as Prince of Syracuse. She first thought that Syracuse was the name of my father; when I had explained to her that Syracuse was the name of a famous town in Sicily, she asked me whether I belonged to the great family whose motto was *qui s'excuse, s'iracuse.*

"On my answering in the negative, she exclaimed: 'But surely you belong at least to the Maffia? Oh do, it would be so interesting!' In order to please her I at once belonged to that society of secret assassins. However, I soon noticed that she thought the Maffia was the Sicilian form of a society for patriotic Mafficking.

"When we became a little more intimate, she told me that I was never to speak of anything else than Syracuse. That would give me a certain *cachet*, as she put it, and distinguish me from the others. Accordingly I placed all my stories and occasional sallies of talk at Syracuse. I was the Syracusan. She swore my accent was Syracusan, and that my entire personality breathed Syracusan air. In society she presented me as a member of a curious race, the Syracusans, in Sicily, close to the Riviera.

"One day she surprised me with the question whether the men of Syracuse were still in the habit of marrying two women at a time. She had read in some book of the double marriage of Dionysus the Elder in the fourth century B.C. I calmed her in that respect. I said that since that time things had changed at Syracuse.

"On the other hand, I was unable to make out whether she was a divorced virgin, or a deceased sister's wife. It was not clear at all. When conversing with me alone, she was as dry as a Nonconformist; but in a drawing-room, full of people, she showered upon me all the sweets of passionate flirtation.

"One day I told her that I had won great victories in the chariot races at Olympia. She looked at me with a knowing smile and said: 'Come, come, why did I not read about it in the *Daily Nail*?' and, showing me the inside of her hat, she pointed at a slip of paper in it, on which was printed: 'I am somewhat of a liar myself.' I assured her that I had really won great prizes at Olympia.

"'Were they in the papers?' she asked.

"I said, we had no papers at that time.

"'No papers?' she exclaimed. 'Why, were you like the negroes? No papers! What will you tell me next? Had you perhaps no top-hats either? Do you mean to tell me that this great poet of yours —what you call him?—ah, Lord Homer, had no top-hat?'

"I assured her that we had no hats whatever.

"'Oh, I see,' she said, 'you were founded like the blue boys,—I see. But surely you wore gloves?'

"On my denying it, she turned a little pale.

"'No gloves either? Then I must ask you only one more thing: had you no shoes either?'

"'No,' I said, calmly, 'some of us, like Socrates, went always barefoot, others in sandals.'

"She smiled incredulously. I told her that in the heyday of Athens men in the streets went about over one-third nude. She did not mind the nude, but she stopped at the word heyday.

"She asked me: 'On which day of the year fell your heyday?'

"I did not quite know what to say, until it flashed upon my mind that she meant 'hay-day.' I soon saw I was right, because she added:

"'Does going barefoot cure hay-fever? And is that the reason why so many people still talk of Socrates?'

"I stared at her. Was it really possible that she did not know who Socrates was? I tried to give a short sketch of your life, O Socrates, but I could not go beyond the time before you were born. For, when I said that your mother had been a midwife, my lady friend recoiled with an expression of terror.

"'What,' she exclaimed, 'he was the son of a midwife?—a midwife?—Pray, do not let us talk about such people! I hoped he was at least the son of a baronet. How could you ever endure his company?'

"'That was just it,' said I, 'I could not. His charm was so great, that for fear of neglecting everything else I fled from him like a hunted stag.'

"'But pray,' she retorted, 'what charm can there be in a son of a midwife? I can imagine some interest in a clever midwife,—but in her son? Oh, that is too absurd for words!'

"'My charming friend,' I answered, 'Socrates was, as he frequently remarked it, himself a sort of midwife, who never pretended to be parent to a thought, but only to have helped others to produce them.'

"'Oh, is that it,—' she said dryly, 'Socrates did manual services in midwifery? How lost to all shame your women must have been to engage a man in their most delicate moments. I now see why so many of my lady friends deserted a man who had announced lectures on Plato. He also talked about Socrates, and when it became known that Socrates was a wretched midwife's clerk, we left the lecture-hall in indignation. Fancy that man said he talked about Plato, and yet in his discourses he talked about nurseries, teetotalism, Christian Science and all such things as date only of yesterday, and of which Plato could have known nothing.'

"'But my lovely Entréa,' I interrupted, 'Plato does talk of all these things, and with a vengeance.'

"'How *could* he talk of them?' she triumphantly retorted. 'Did he ever read the *Daily Nail* or *Ladies' Wold*?'

"'No,' I said, 'he never did, which is one of the many reasons of his divine genius. But he does speak of temperance, and simple life, and the super-man, and all the other so-called discoveries of this age, with the full knowledge of a sage who has actually experienced those eccentricities.'

"My fascinating friend could stand it no longer. Interrupting me she said:

"'Why, every child knows that Plato talked of nothing else than of Platonic love. We all expected to hear about nothing else than that curious love

which all of us desire, if it is not too long insisted upon. We went to the course to revive in ourselves long-lost shivers not only of idealism, but even of bimetallism, or as it were the double weight of it.

"'We thought, since Plato is evidently named after platinum, which we know to be the dearest of precious metals, his philosophy must treat of such emotions as cost us the greatest sacrifice.

"'Platonic love is the most comfortable of subjects to talk or think about. It makes you look innocent, and yet on its brink there are such nicely dreadful possibilities of plunging into delightful abysses. Each thing gets two values; one Platonic, the other, —the naughty value. A whole nude arm may be Platonic; but a voluptuous wrist peeping out of fine laces may be only—a tonic.

"'Now these are precisely the subjects of which we desired to hear in those lectures. Instead of which the man said nothing about them, nothing about that dear Platonic love; in fact, he said that Plato never speaks of what is now called Platonic love. And that man calls himself a scholar? Why, my very chamber-maid knows better. The other day she saw the lecturer's photo in a paper and, smiling in an embarrassed way, she said to the cook: "That's the man what talks at Cliradge's about miscarriages." Was she not right? Is not Platonic love the cause of so many miscarriages, before, during, or after the wedding ceremony?

"'And then,' she added with a gasp, 'we all knew that Plato was a mystic, full of that shivery, half-toney, gruesomely something or other which makes us feel that even in everyday life we are surrounded by asterisks, or, as they also call them, astral forces.

Was not Plato an intimate friend of Mrs Blavatsky, the sister of Madame Badarzewska, who was the composer of "A Maiden's Prayer"? There! why then did that lecturer not talk about palmistry, auristry, sorcery, witchcraft, and other itch-crafts? Not a word about them! We were indignant.

"'A friend of mine, Mrs Oofry Blazing, who talks French admirably, and whose teeth are the envy of her nose, declared: "*Cet homme est un fumiste.*" Of course, he sold us fumes, instead of perfumes. One amongst us, an American woman of the third sex, told the man publicly straight into his face, and with inimitable delicacy of touch: "Sir, what are you here for?" Quite so; what *was* he there for? We wanted Plato, and nothing but Plato. One fairly expected him to begin every sentence with P's, or Pl's. Instead of that he wandered from one subject to another. One day he talked about the general and the particular; the other day about the particular and the general. But what particular is there in a general, I beg of you? Is an admiral not much more important? We do not trouble about the army at all. And then, and chiefly, what has a general to do with Plato? The lectures were not on military matters, but on the most immaterial matters, which yet matter materially. But, of course, now that you tell me that Socrates, Plato's master, was a he-midwife, I can very well understand that his modern disciples are philosophical miscarriages!'"

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The gods laughed heartily, and Sappho asked Plato how he liked the remarks of Entréa. Plato smiled and made Sappho blush by reminding her what the little ones had at all times said of her, although not a tittle of truth was in it. "No ordinary citizen, nor his wife," he added, "ever wants to know persons or things as they really are. They only want to know what they imagine or desire to be the truth. This is the reason why so many men before the public take up a definite pose, the one demanded by the public. This they do, not out of sheer fatuity, but of necessity. A king could not afford to sing in public, no matter how well he sang; it does not fit the image the public likes to form about a king. In fact, the better he sang, the more harm it would do him. I have always impressed the little ones as a mystic, an enthusiast, a blessed spirit, as you Goethe used to call me. Yet my principal aim was Apollo, and not Dionysus; clearness, and not the *clair-obscur* of trances."

Alcibiades, whose beautiful head added to the charms of Venice, then continued: "Nothing, O Plato, can be truer than your remark. My lady friend was a living example of your statement. To me, after so many hundreds of experiences, her made-up little mask was no hindrance, — I saw through her within less than a week. She was, at heart, as dry, as kippered, as intentionalist, and coldly self-conscious as the driest of Egyptian book-keepers in a great merchant firm at Corinth. Nothing really interested her; she was only ever running after what she imagined to be the fashion of the moment. What she really wanted was to be the earliest in 'the latest.' When she came to the

bookshop, at five in the afternoon, when all the others came, she would ask the clerk after the latest fashion in novels. She did that so frequently, and with such exasperating regularity, that one day the clerk, who could stand it no longer, said to her: 'Madame, be seated for a few moments—the fashion is just changing.' She, not in the least disconcerted, eagerly retorted: 'I say, is that "the latest"?' The clerk gave notice to leave!

"One day I found her in a very bad humour. When pressed for an explanation, she told me that just at that moment an elegant funeral was going on, at which she was most anxious to attend. 'Why, then, do you not go?' I asked.

"'Because,' she replied, 'it is simply impossible. Just fancy, that good woman died of heart failure!'

"'?'—

"'You cannot see? Heart failure? Can you imagine anybody to die of heart failure, when the only correct thing to do is to die of appendicitis? I telephoned in due time to her doctor, imploring him to declare that she died of that smart disease. But he is a brute. He would not do it. Now I am for ever compromised by the friendship of that woman. Oh how true was the remark of your sage Salami, when he said that nobody can be said to be happy before all his friends have died!'"

Thereupon the gods and heroes congratulated Solon upon his change of profession: having been a sage, he was now a sausage.

"The next time I saw my lady friend," Alcibiades continued, "I found her in tears. Inquiring after the cause of her distress, I learnt:

"'Just imagine! You know my little pet-dog. I bought him of a lady-in-waiting. He has the most exquisite tact and feels happy only in genteel society. An hour ago my maid suddenly left my flat, and expecting, as I did, a lady of very high standing, I did a little dusting and cleaning in my room. When my Toto saw that; when he watched me actually doing housemaid's work, he cried bitterly. He could not bear the idea of my demeaning myself with work unfit for a lady. It was really too touching for words. When I saw the refined sense of genteeldom in Toto's eyes, I too began crying. And so we both cried.'

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"When I had lived through several scenes of the character just described, I could not help thinking that we Athenians were perhaps much wiser than the modern men, in that we did not allow our women to appear in society. They were, it is true, seldom interesting, nor physically greatly developed. On the other hand they never bored us with types of what these little ones call society ladies. I cannot but remember the exquisite evenings which I spent at the house of Critias, where one of our wittiest *hetairai*, or emancipated women, imitated the false manners, hypocrisy and inane pomp of the society ladies of Thebes in Egypt. We laughed until we could see no longer. What Leontion, that *hetaira*, represented was exactly what I observed in my lady friend in London. The same disheartening dryness

of soul; the same exasperating superficiality of intellect; the same lack of all real refinement, that I found a few centuries later in society in the times of the Roman Cæsars.

"London desiccates; whereas Athens or Paris animates. When I gave up my relation to Entréa, I met a woman of about thirty-four, whose head was so perfect that Evænetus himself has never engraved a more absolutely beautiful one. Her hair was not only golden of the most lovely tint, but also full of waves, from long curls in Doric *adagio*, to tantalising Corinthian *pizzicato* frizzles all round. Her face was a cameo cut in onyx, and both lovely and severe. Her loveliness was in the upper part of her face; her severity round the mouth and the chin. This strange reversal of what is usually the case gave her a character of her own. Her stark blue eyes were big and cold, yet sympathetic and intelligent-looking; and her ears were the finest shells that Leucothea presented her mother with from the wine-coloured ocean, and inside the shells were the most enchanting pearls, which the sea-nymph then left in the mouth of the blessed babe as her teeth. She was not tall, but very neatly made; a *fausse maigre*. She wrote bright articles, in which from time to time she wrapped up a big truth in *bon-bon* paper.

"There was in her the richest material for the most enchanting womanhood; a blend of Musarion and Aspasia; or to talk modern style, a blend of Mademoiselle l'Espinasse with Madame Récamier. She was neither. Not that she made any preposterous effort to be, what Paris calls, a Madame Récamier. But London desiccated her. From dry by nature, she became drier still by London. Being

as dry as she was, she only cared for mystic things; for what is behind the curtain of things; for the borderland of knowledge and dream. As sand can never drink in enough rain, so dry souls want to intoxicate themselves with mystic alcohol. In vulgarly dry persons that rain from above becomes—mud; in refinedly dry souls it is atomised into an intellectual spray. Her whole soul was athirst of that spray.

"When I told her that I was the son of Clinias, she wanted to know first of all, what had been going on at the mysteries of Eleusis. I told her that, like all the Hellenes, I had sworn never to reveal what I had seen at the holy ceremonies. This she could not understand. In her religion the priests are but too anxious to initiate anybody that cares for it.

"'Initiate me—oh initiate me—I beg you,' she said, and looked more beautiful than ever. Her arm trembled; her voice faltered. Even if I did not respect my oath, I should not have told her the teachings of Eleusis. They were far too simple for her mystery-craving soul. So I told her of the Orphic mysteries, and the more she heard of the extravagant and mind-shaking rites and tenets, the more interested she became. Her mouth, usually so severe, swung again in pouty lines of youthful timidity, and her voice got a 'cello down of mellowness.

"'Let us introduce Orphism into this country,' she exclaimed. 'Will you be honorary treasurer?'

"I accepted," said Alcibiades. "Within three days Orphism was presented as the *Orphic Science.* The members were called priestesses, archontes, or acolytes, according to their degree. Within a month

there were 843 members. Jamblichus was sent for and made secretary. Costumes were invented; pamphlets printed; cures promised; shares offered. It was declared that trances and mystic shivers would be procured 'while you wait'; dreams accounted for; inexplicables explained; the curtain of things raised every Friday at five, after tea. Finally the Orphics gave their first dinner at the Hotel Cecil.

"That was the worst blow. After that I abandoned Orphism."

FOURTH NIGHT

ALCIBIADES—CONTINUED

Hestia now interrupted Alcibiades with the question whether all the women in nebulous Britannia were as grotesque as those that he had described.

Alcibiades smiled and said:

"Not all of them, but all at times. Women must necessarily adapt themselves to the nature of their men, as clerks do to that of their patrons, or soldiers to that of their generals and officers. The Englishman buys his liberty at the expense of much human capital; which cannot but make him eccentric and grotesque. The women attune themselves to him, although no foreigner has a clearer nor a more depreciative idea of Englishmen's angularity than have English women. As women they do not, as a rule, care for liberty at all, and hence consider the sacrifices made by men for liberty as superfluous and uncalled-for. A woman wants in all things the human note, which the average Englishman hates. Hence the surprising power of Continental men over English women. A hundred picked Greeks from Athens, Sicyon and Syracuse could bring half of all English women to book—for Cytherea. How could it be otherwise? The animated, passionate, direct talk of a Greek is something so novel to an English woman that she is as it were hypnotised by it. She

thinks it is she and her personality that has given her Continental admirer that *verve* of expression which she has never before experienced in the men of her circle. This alone is such flattery to her that she loses her head.

"If one resolutely goes on scraping off the man-made chalk from the manners and actions of English women, one is frequently rewarded with the pleasure of arriving at last at the woman behind the chalk. This is more especially the case in women of the higher classes. The only time in England I felt something of that painful bliss that mortals call love, was in the case of a lady friend of mine who, under mountains of London clay, hid away a passionate, loving woman. She was tall and luxuriously built. Her hands were of perfect shape and condignly continued by lovely arms, that attached themselves into majestic shoulders with the ease of a rivulet entering a lake by a graceful curve. Over her shoulders the minaret of her neck stood watch. In charming contrast to the *legato cantabile* of her body was the *staccato* of her mind. Her words pecked at things like birds. Sometimes there appeared amongst the latter an ugly vulture or two; but there were more colibris and magpies. I had met her for months before I surmised that there was something behind that London clay. But when the moment came and the bells began sobbing in her minaret, then I knew that here was a heart aglow with true passion and with the dawn of hope divine. Like all women that do truly love, she would not believe me that I sincerely felt what I said. Doubt is to women what danger is to men: it sharpens the delight of love. She never became really tender; ay, she was

amazed and moved to tears at my being so. Her heart was uneducated; it was *gauche* at the game of love.

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"Amongst the persons dressed in female attire I also met a number of beings whom, but for my long stay at Sparta, I should hardly have recognised as women. A French friend of mine remarked of them: '*Ce ne sont pas des femmes, ce sont des Américaines.*' The species is very much in evidence in London. They reminded me violently of the Spartan women. They are handsome, if more striking than beautiful. I noticed that in contrast to European women, American females gain in years what they lose in dress at night. They look older when undressed. They have excellent teeth, and execrable hands; they jump well, but walk badly. Their great speciality is their voice, which is strident, top-nasal, *falsetto*, disheartening. The most beautiful amongst them is murdered by her voice. It is as if out of the most perfect mouth, set in the most charming face, an ugly rat would jump at one. That voice, the English say, comes from the climate of America. (This I do not believe at all; for I have noticed that in England everything is ascribed to the climate, as to the thing most talked about by the people. Climate and weather are the most popular subjects in England; the one that is never out of fashion.) As a matter of fact it comes from the total lack of emotionality in the Americans;

just as amongst musical instruments the more emotional ones, like the 'cello, have more pectoral tonality, whereas the fife, for instance, having no deep emotions at all to express, is high and thin toned.

"Nothing seemed to me more interesting than the way in which the American female reminded me of the Spartans and the Amazons. Could anything be more striking than the coincidence between two conversations, one of which I had, far over two thousand years ago, with the Queen of an Amazonian tribe in Thracia, and the other with the wife of an American flour dealer settled in London? When I called on Thamyris in her tent, one of her first questions was as to the latest dramatic piece by Sophocles. I at once saw that the Queen wanted to impress her *entourage* with her great literary abilities. I gave her some news about Sophocles, whereupon she turned round to her one-breasted she-warriors and said with a superior smile:

"'You must know that Sophocles is the latest star in Athenian comedy.'

"She mixed you up, O Sophocles, with Aristophanes. With the American flour dealer's wife my experience was as follows: He had made my acquaintance in a bar-room, and invited me to his house. On the way there he said to me:

"'My missus is quite a linguist. She talks French like two natives. Do talk to her French.'

"When we arrived at the house and entered the drawing-room, a rather handsome woman rose from an arm-chair, and stepping up to me said something that sounded like '*Monsieur, je suis ravie de faire votre connaissance*'; I thanked her, also in

French, when suddenly she bowed over me and whispered in American fifes:

"'Don't continue, that's all I know.'

"When I left, the husband accompanied me to the door. Before I took leave, he twinkled with his right eye, and asked me with a knowing look, 'Well, sir, what do you think of the linguistic range of my madame?'

"I did not quite know what to reply. At last I said: 'Like a true soldier she fights on the borderland.'

"One of the strangest things to note in London society is the fascination exercised by American women on Englishmen. Many of the really intelligent men among the English are practically lost as soon as the American woman begins playing with the little lasso of thin ropes which she carries about her in the shape of an acquired brightness and a studied vivacity. The most glaring defects of those women do not seem to exist for the average Englishman. He takes her loud brightness for French *esprit* dished up to him in intelligible English. Her total lack of self-restraint and modesty he takes for a charming *abandon*. The real fact is that he is afraid of her. She may have many a bump: she certainly has not that of reverence. Her irreverent mind makes light of the *grandezza* of Englishmen, and thus cows him by his fear of making himself ridiculous.

"The first American woman (—*sit venia verbo*, as you would say, O Cicero—) I met in London was one married to an English lord. She was tall, well-built, with rich arms and hips, an expressive head, very fond of the arts, more especially of

music. Even her head, which was a trifle square, indicated that. When she learnt that I really was the famous Alcibiades, her excitement knew no bounds. She was good enough to explain it to me:

"'Just fancy that! Alcibiades! (They pronounce my name Elkibidees.) I am simply charmed! I have so far every year introduced some new and striking personage into drawing-rooms, in order to stun the natives of this obsolete island. I have brought into fashion one-legged dancers; three-legged calves; single-minded thought-readers; illusionists; disillusionists; disemotionists; dancers classical, mediæval, and hyper-modern; French lectures on the isle of Lesbos, after a series of discourses on the calves of the legs of Greek goddesses in marble; not to forget my unique course of lectures given at the drawing-room of the dearest of all duchesses, on the history of *décolletage*.

"'This year, to be quite frank with you, Mr Elkibidees, I meant to arrange in the magnificent drawing-room of an Oriental English lady, the uniquest and at the same time the boldest exhibition ever offered to the dear nerves of any class of women. I cannot quite tell you what it was going to be. I can only faintly indicate that it was to be a collection of all the oldest as well as latest inventions securing the tranquillity of enjoying just one child in the family. This, I have no doubt, would have been the greatest sensation of the season.

"'The city of Manchester and the town of Leeds would have publicly protested against so "immoral" an exhibition. Of course their councillors would

have done so after careful study of the things exhibited. Three bishops would have threatened to preach publicly in Hyde Park; while five archdeacons would have volunteered to be the honorary secretaries of so interesting an exhibition.

"'I communicated the idea to Father Bowan, a virulent Jesuit, who in the creepiest of *capucinades*, delivered on most Sundays during the season, gives us the most delightful shivers of repentance, and likewise many an inkling of charming vice of which we did not know anything before we learned it from his pure lips. He was delighted. "Do, my lady, do do it. I am just a little short of horrors, and your exhibition will give me excellent material for at least four Sundays. I hope you have not forgotten to illustrate by wax figures certain methods, far more efficient than any instrument can be, and most completely enumerated and described in the works of members of our holy Order, such as Suarez, Sanchez, Escobar, and others. Should you not have these works, I will send you an accurate abridgment of their principal statements of facts."

"'When I heard the Rev. Father talk like that, I could scarcely control myself with enthusiasm in anticipating the huge sensation my exhibition was sure to make. It would have been the best fed, the best clad, and the most enlightened sensation ever made in England since the battle of Hastings. I really thought that nothing greater could be imagined.

"'And yet, when I now come to think what a draw you will be, Mr Elki, if properly taken in hand, duly advertised, adroitly paragraphed, con-

stantly interviewed, and occasionally leadered,—when I think of all that, I cannot but think that I shall have in you the greatest catch that has ever been in any country under any sun. In fact, I have my plan quite ready.

"'I will announce a big reception, "to meet" you. Some ladies will, by request, arrive in Greek dress. The public orator of one of the great Universities will address you in Greek, and you will reply in the same language. Then three of the prettiest daughters of earls and marquesses will dance the dance of the Graces, after which there will be a dramatic piece made by Hall Caine and Shaw, each of them writing alternate pages, the subject of which will be the Thirty Years' War, in which you excelled so much.'

"I interrupted her," said Alcibiades, "remarking that the Thirty Years' War was two thousand years after my time; my war was the Peloponnesian War.

"'Very well,' she exclaimed, 'the Peloponnesian War. I do not care which. Hall Caine will praise everything in connection with war, in his best *Daily Nail* style. He is, you know, our leading light. He always wants to indulge in great thoughts, and would do so too, but for the awkward fact that he cannot find any.

"'Shaw, on the other hand, will cry down in choicest Gaelic all the glories of war. It will be the biggest fun out.

"'And then, *entre nous*, could you not bring with you a Lais, a Phryne or two, in their original costumes as they allured all you naughty Greeks in times bygone? It would be charmingly revolting,

When I dimly represent to myself how the young eagles of society will tremble with pleasure at the thought of adding to their lists of conquests, in pink and white, a Corinthian or Athenian *demi-mondaine* of two thousand years ago, I feel that I am a Personality.

" 'If I could offer such an unheard-of opportunity I should get first leaders in the *Manchester Guardian* and mild rebukes, full of secret zest, in the godly *Guardian*; let alone other noble papers read by the goody-goody ones. The *Record* would send me a testimonial signed by the leading higher critics. I should be the heroine of the day and of the night.' "

The gods and heroes encouraged Alcibiades by their gay laughter to tell them all that happened at the " At Home " of his American lady friend, and he continued as follows:

" When the evening of the Greek *soirée* came, I went to the drawing-room in company with Phryne and Lais, who were most charmingly dressed as flute-girls. When we entered the large room we saw a vast assembly of women and men, mostly dressed in the preposterous fashion of the little ones. The women looked like zoological specimens, some resembling Brazilian butterflies, others reptiles, others again snakes or birds of prey. The upper part of their bodies was uncovered, no matter whether the rest of the body had gone through countless campaigns enlivened by numerous capitulations, or whether it had just expanded into the buds of rosy spring. The men looked like the clowns in our farces. They wore a costume that no Greek slave would have donned. It was all black and all of the same cut. Instead of looking enterprising, they all looked like

undertakers. Each of them made a nervous attempt to appear as inoffensive, and as self-effacing as possible; just like undertakers entering the house where a person had died.

"When we entered the room the whole assembly rose and cried: 'Cairo—Cairo!' (they were told to cry *Chaire*—but in vain). I could distinctly hear remarks such as these: 'How weird!'—'Is it not uncanny?'—'It makes me feel creepy!' After a few minutes there was a deep silence, and an elderly gentleman came up through the middle of the room and, bowing first to us and then to the people assembled, stepped up to the platform and began a speech in a strange language, which I vaguely remembered having heard before.

"Phryne suddenly began to giggle, and so irresistible was her laughter that both Lais and I could not but join her, especially when in words broken by continuous laughter she told us:

"'The old gent pretends to speak Athenian Greek!'

"It was indeed too absurd for words. There was especially that vulgar sound *i* constantly recurring where we never dreamt of using such a sound; and our beautiful *ypsilon* (*y*) he pronounced like the English *u*, which is like serving champagne in soup-plates. When he stumbled over an *ou*, he pronounced it with a sound to which dentists are better accustomed than any Athenian ever was, and our deep and manly *ch* (χ) he castrated down to a lisping *k*. I remember Carians in Asia Minor who talked like that. Our noble and incomparable language, orchestral, picturesque, sculptural, became like the Palace of Minos which they are excavating at

present: in its magnificent halls, eaten by weather and worm, one sees only poor labourers and here and there a directing mind.

"I imagined that the good man meant by his speech to welcome me back into the world, and so when my turn to answer him came, I got up and, leaning partly on Phryne and partly on Lais, who stood near me, I replied as follows, after speaking for a little while in Attic, in the language of the country:

"'It is indeed with no ordinary satisfaction that I beg to thank you, O Sophist, and you here present for the pleasant reception that you have given us. My lot has on the whole not been altogether bad. Your studious men, it is true, affect to condemn me, my policy, and my private life. Perhaps they will allow me to remark that the irregularity of my past morals is a matter of temptations. Diogenes used to tell us that one of my sternest historian-critics in Syracuse left his wife, children and house on being for once tempted by the chamber-maid of one of my passing caprices; and the historians of your race who so gravely decry a Madame de Montespan would, did Madame only smile at them, incontinently fall into a fit of hopeless moral collapse.

"'But if your men write against me, irrespective of what they really feel about me, I am sure your women take a much more lenient view of the case.'

"(Discreet applause.)

"'They feel that ambition did not eat up all the forces of my soul, and that in worshipping Ares (Mars), I never forgot the cult of Aphrodite (Venus) either. We Hellenes ventured to be humans, and that is why now we have become demi-gods. You,

my friends, do not even venture to be humans, and that is why you remain the little ones.

"'I notice in the northern countries of Europe men do not, or to a very small degree care for women. Perhaps that is the reason why the Roman Catholic idea of the Holy Virgin has had no lasting hold on these nations.

"'I have seen,' continued Alcibiades, 'too many faces, masks, and pretences to be much impressed by the apparent indifference of the northerner to the charms of women. It never meant more than either an unavowed inclination towards his own sex, or sheer boorishness. Even we Hellenes had very much to suffer from our political and social neglect of women outside emancipated ones. The Romans acted much more wisely in that respect; while the nation of our hostess has practically become what we called a *gynæcocracy* or women's rule, where man is socially what our Greek women used to be: relegated to the background. I hear, this is the privilege of Englishmen. I understand. When I was young I learnt but too much about that privilege.

"'But if I should be asked for advice I would tell your men to take your women much more seriously. I know that Englishmen are much more grave than serious; yet with regard to women they ought to be much more intent on considering them in everything their mates, and in several things their superiors. Of course, this is an unmilitary nation; and such nations will always remain boors in Sunday dress.

"'One of your great writers who, being outside the academic clique, has always been maligned by the officials, has written a beautiful essay on the

influence of women. Poor Buckle—he treated the problem as a schoolroom paper. He came to the result that women encourage the deductive mode of thinking. However, women are more seductive than deductive, and their real influence is to charm the young, to warm the mature, and not to alarm the old.

"'I, being now above the changes of time, I only, contemplate their charm. And what greater potentialities of charm could one wish for than those that your women possess? If those magnificently cut and superbly coloured eyes learned to be expressive; if the muscles of those fine cheeks knew how to move with speedier grace; if that purely outlined mouth were more animated—what possibilities of fascination, like so many fairies, might rise over the dispassionate surface of those silent lakes! As they are, their several organs are positively hostile, or coldly indifferent to one another. The forehead, instead of being the ever-changing capital of the human column, setting off their beautiful hair, as ivory sets off gold; the shoulders, the seat of human grace, instead of giving to the head the pedestal of the Charites; and the arms and hands, instead of giving by their movements the proper lilt and cadence to everything said or done;—all these hate one another respectively. The arms do not converse with the face; theirs is like other conversations: after a few remarks on the weather all communication stops. So sullen is the antipathy of the arms, that as a rule they hide on the back, as if begrudging the face or the bust their company. It is in that way that English women who might be as beautiful and charming as the maidens of Thebes or of

Tanagra, have made themselves into walking Caryatides, whom we invariably represented as doing a slavish labour, with their arms on their backs, and with a heavy load on their heads.

"'Remove the arms, O women of England, from your badly swung back and bring them into play in front of your well-shaped bust and your beautiful faces! Let the consciousness of your power electrify your looks, your dimples, and your gait; and when from musing Graces you will have changed into graceful Muses, your men too will be much superior to what they used to be.

"'See how little your influence is, as your language clearly indicates. Is not your language the only idiom in Europe that has completely dropped that fine shade of sweet intimacy which the use of *thou* and *thy* is giving to the other languages? Is not a new world of tenderest internal joy permeating the French, German or Italian woman who for the first time dares to *tutoyer* her lover? You women of England, the natural priestesses of all warmth and intimacy, you have suffered all that to decay.

"'To your men we Hellenes say: "Imitate us!" To you women, we do not say so. We ask you to exceed us, to go beyond us, and then alone when women will be what we Hellenic men were, that is, specimens of all-round humanity, then indeed you too will rise to the higher status, and the golden age will again fill the world with light and happiness!'

"After that speech of mine," continued Alcibiades, "there was much applause. I mingled with the public, and was at once interpellated by one of the American ladies present:

"'Most interesting speech,' she said. 'What I

especially liked were your remarks about thou-ing. And what I want to know most is whether Caryatides were thou-ing one another?'

"I was a little perplexed, and all that I could answer was: 'Their dimples did,' and this seemed to satisfy my American lady marvellously well.

"Another lady asked me how many Muses we had, and on hearing that their number was nine, she was highly astonished. 'Only nine? Why in London there are mews in every second street. How strange!'

"A third lady asked me what I meant by shoulders being a pedestal. Her shoulders, she was sure, were no pedestals, and she would not allow anyone to stand on them. She added, that she was aware of my having said that the shoulders were the pedestal of the Charites, but with her best intention she could not allow even charity to be extended to her shoulders. I smiled consent.

"A fourth lady, whose name was Valley, but who was a mountain of otherwise rosy flesh, asked me what I had meant by maidens of Podagra? She was sure that young maids never suffered from that ugly disease. I told her that I really meant Chiragra. This satisfied her marvellously well.

"During that time Phryne and Lais were the heroines of the evening, lionised by women, and courted by men. The women asked them all sorts of questions and seemed extraordinarily eager to be instructed. One of them, a brilliant duchess —(who had three secretaries providing her with the latest information about everything, the first preparing all the catch-words from A to G, the second from H to N, and the third from O to Z)—asked Phryne

whether she would not permit her to convince herself of the accuracy of the estimate in which Hyperides held the exquisite form of Phryne's bosom. (A middle-class woman thereupon asked Mr Gox, M.P., what Hyperides meant. Mr Gox told her it was the Greek for Rufus, son of Abraham.) Phryne volunteered to do so at once, and the women disappeared in a special room, from where very soon cries of amazement could be heard. The pure beauty of Phryne enchanted the women. The sensation was immense, ay immensest.

"The representative of the *Daily Nail* offered first £2000, then £3000, finally £5000 for permission to kodak Phryne.

"The *Bad Times* at once prepared a folio edition of *The Engravers' Engravings*, payable in 263 instalments, or preferably at once.

"The *Daily Marconigraph* started a public discussion in its columns: 'Shall the lower part of the upper anatomy of the female trunk be unveiled?'

"The excitement became so universal that Mr Gigerl See at once convened a national meeting for the erection of ten new statues to Shakespeare; and General Booth ordered an absolute fast of 105 hours' duration.

"All the directors of music halls, the next day, stormed Hotel Ritz where Phryne had a suite of six lovely rooms, and offered impossible prices for a performance of five minutes. Phryne, after consulting me, consented to appear at the Palace Theatre, in the immortal scene when, in presence of the entire population of Athens, she descended into the sea. Half of the proceeds were to be given to a fund for poor women in childbed. Endless advertisements

soon filled every available space on London's walls, parks, newspapers, 'buses, railways, and shops. Tickets sold at tenfold their original prices.

"At last the evening came. In the first two rows there were practically nothing but clergymen. The following rows were filled with lawyers, M.P.'s and University professors. In the boxes one could see all the aristocracy of the country. When Phryne's turn came, the orchestra played Wagner's 'Pilgrim's Chorus,' toward the end of which the curtain rolled up, and the scene represented the Piræus with apparently countless people, all in Greek dress. When the expectation was at its height, Phryne appeared clad only with the veil of her perfect beauty, and descended into the sea. Before she entered the water she said her prayers to Aphrodite, and then slowly went into the waves.

"Everyone in the audience had come to the theatre expecting to be badly shocked. To their utmost astonishment they found that there was not only nothing shocking in the scene, but even much to fill the people with awe. Like all the barbarians, the little ones deem nudity a shocking sight. What shocked them that night was the fact that they were not shocked. They felt for a moment that many of their notions and views must be radically wrong, and that was the only shock they received. Phryne triumphed over Londoners, as she did over the Athenians.

"My American lady friend was in raptures. The incredible sensation her Elki and his Athenian women had caused in *blasé* London society made her the centre of all social centres for a fortnight. She received innumerable letters from innumerable

people. The greatest writers that the world has ever seen, such as Miss Cora Morelli, wrote to her saying, that:

"'She had from her infancy onward taken a deep interest in Alcibiades and his time, and that now, having actually seen him, she would forthwith publish a novel under the attractive title of "The Mighty Elki," let alone another novel, full of the most delightful shivers, called "Phry, the Pagan."'

"Mr Hall Caine, in a thundering article, fulminated against the row made over Phryne, and solemnly declared that the charms of his Manxman were incomparably greater. One day Mr Caine called on me. He implored me to become a Christian, and assured me that the shortest way to that effect would be to attend a performance of his piece of that name. I thanked him for his kind offer, but politely declined it. Whereupon Mr Caine remained musing, until at last he surprised me with the question: 'Mr Alcib, you are the man to solve the problem of my life. Do you not think I bear a remarkable resemblance to Lord Bacon?'

"I answered that I could discern no resemblance between him and the witty Chancellor, but that I was bound to confess that there was a striking resemblance between him and Shakespeare.

"Mr Caine smiled a superior smile. 'I wonder,' he said, 'you are not aware of the fact that Shakespeare was written by Lord Bacon.'

"'Very strange—very strange,' I replied. 'We in Olympus think that Shakespeare was written by the victory over the Armada, and published by Elizabeth and Co.'

"'Do you really think such stuff in Olympus?'

exclaimed Mr Caine; 'then I do not wonder that I have never been invited to that place. What has the Armada to do with *Hamlet* or *King Lear*? You might just as well say that my novels were written by our victory at Colenso and Spion Kop. It is revoltingly absurd. A book is a book and not shrapnel or bombs. Sir, I am ashamed of you; the purple of red indignation rises swellingly into my distended physiognomy, and my thought-fraught forehead sinks under the ignominy of such life-bereft incoherences!'

"I advised Mr Caine to drink Perrier; he thanked me profusely, and assured me that he had always done so. He evidently mixed it up with the Pierian sources of literature which, I learn, provide the innumerable papers of the Associated Press with the necessary water under the name of Perrier.

* * * * *

"In my honour my American lady friend gave, a few days later, a concert. The little ones call a concert a series of instrumental and vocal pieces played for sheer amusement, and without any relation to poetry, dance, or religion. I have these three to four hundred years accustomed myself to their music, which is thoroughly different from ours, being polyphonous, whereas ours was never so. Dionysus, who presides at their music, has often told us that he introduced it into the modern world in order to show his exceeding power even in times when the men and women have lamentably fallen from the height of

our Grecian culture. Our music was essentially Apollinic; that of the moderns is Dionysiac. You remember, O Zeus, that even Apollo was moved when three of the moderns had the honour to perform before him. Even he praised Mozart, Chopin, and some pieces of Weber. You need not blush, Frédéric, and you might help me to entertain and charm our holy circle by playing us one of your compositions in which beauty of form is married in tender love to truth of feeling."

Thereupon, at a sign of Zeus, Milo of Crotona, the Olympian victor of all victors, carried a piano on his mighty back, and put it down gently in one of the mystic barks. Chopin, bowing to the gods, and more particularly to Juno and Diana, sat down to the instrument and played the second and the third movement of his E minor *Concerto.* Round him waved the three Graces, while Dionysus laid an ivy wreath on his blessed head. Even the gods were moved, and when Frédéric had ended, they applauded him with passionate admiration.

"I wish, O Chopin," continued Alcibiades, "I had known you in my mortal time. What Terpander and Thaletas, the great musicians, did for Sparta, you might have helped me to do for Athens. It was not to be. The thought saddens me still. More than Sophocles and Aristophanes or Socrates, your incomparable music would have helped to keep the *Kosmos* of Athens in due proportions."

A short pause ensued, and all looked with timidity on Zeus' immovable face.

"But let us drop these sorrowful reminiscences and return to the London concert given by my American hostess.

"She had engaged the best-known artists. For the solo songs she engaged a woman who had to be carried into the room in a motor chair, and was not allowed to stand up, before three architects had examined the solidity of the floor. Her range was from the deep *p* to the high *l*. She sang baritone, and soprano at the same time, and what her tone wanted in width her *taille* amply replaced. She sang nothing but Wagner, whose music, it would appear, is written for two-ton women only. No smaller tonnage need apply. While she sang, three dozen violins executed the tremolos of five hundred whimpering children, while forty counter-basses gave, every three minutes, a terrible grunt in *x* minor. There were also fifteen fifes, and twenty-one different kinds of brass instruments, some of which had necks much longer than that of the oldest giraffe. The music was decidedly sensual and nerve-irritating. It was full of chords, both accords and discords, and what little melody there was in it was kneaded out into a tapeworm of prodigious length and such hydralike vitality, that no matter how frequently the strings throttled off its head, it yet constantly recurred bulging out a new head.

"The men present liked the singer; the women adored the music. It gave them all sorts of shivers, and although they did not understand it at all, they yet felt that here was a new shiver. Or as one of them, the bright Mrs Blazing, remarked: '*Quel artiste que ce M. Wagner!* He has translated into music the grating noise of a comb on silk, the creaking of a rusty key in an old lock, and the strident rasp of a skidding sleigh or motor on hard-frozen snow.'

"The next artist was a Belgian violinist. For reasons that you alone, O Zeus, could tell us, the Belgians are credited with a special gift for pulling strings in general, and those of the violin in particular. Being a nation midway between the Germans and the French, they are believed to possess much of German musical talent and something of French elegance. This would easily make them good 'cello players. But not satisfied with the 'cello, in which they have excelled more than one nation, they must needs be great violinists too. However, the violin, while not at all the king of instruments, is yet the most vindictive and jealous amongst them. It is like the Lorelei: it allures hundreds, only to dash their bones against the rock of Failure. It wants the delicacy of a woman and the strength of a man. It requires the soul of spring and the heart of summer to play it well.

"A Belgian is *eo ipso* debarred from reaching the height of violin-playing; just as a Chinaman, with his over-specialised mind, can never well play the orchestral piano. A Belgian heart is moving in a colourless and slouching *andante*; the violin moves in a profoundly agitated *adagio* or *allegro*. The violin is the instrument of luckless nations, such as were formerly the Italians, the Poles, and the Hungarians who gave us Paganini, Wienavski and Joachim. The Belgians have nearly always enjoyed the *embonpoint* of fat prosperity. '*Leur jeu bedonne*,' as Mrs Blazing would say.

"The Belgian played your *Chaconne* in D minor, O Bach."

At these words of Alcibiades all the thinkers and poets present rose from their seats and bowed to

John Sebastian, who stood near Strabo and Aristotle, being exceedingly fond of geographical lore. Even the gods applauded and Polyhymnia allowed him to kiss her hands.

"You remember, O John Sebastian, when I met you near Lützen at one of your solitary walks and you spoke to me of your *Chaconne*. I listened with rapt attention and told you that your composition, which you then played to me on a violin which the old inn-keeper lent you and which had just arrived from Steiner in Tyrol, rendered as perfectly as possible the sentiments I had felt when for the first time in my life I went to the Oracle at Dodona, where the winds rush through the high oak-trees with a fierce power such as can be heard in no other spot in Europe. I re-imagined my awe-struck meditations in the holy grove; I heard the stormy music of Zeus' winds in Zeus' trees; I again felt all through me the soul-moving chorus of the priests which ends in a jubilating mood, and finally I left with deep regret at having to re-enter my life of stress after having spent a day in sacred and mystic seclusion.

"When the Belgian artist played it, I listened in vain for Dodona. What I heard was the rustling of silken tones through the wood of the chairs and tables at the Carlton. Where was the Oracle? Where the chorus of the priests? Where their jubilation? The only thing that I found were my regrets. But the public was charmed. It is imperative to admire the *Chaconne*, chiefly because it is played Violin *solo*. Mrs Blazing explained the matter to me with her wonted rapidity of mind: 'Why wonder at our admiration of the *Chaconne*? Do we not say: "*Chacun à son goût*?"'

"The next artist was a pianist, whose name sounded like Pianowolsky or Forterewsky. He was of course a Pole. The English have long found out that -welsky or -ewsky goes with the name of a great pianist, as the pedal goes with the piano. It was for this reason that Liszt, the Orpheus of the last century, never had any success in England. He ought to have called himself Franzescowitch Lisztobulszky, and then, no doubt, he would have scored heavily. Rubinstein had indeed much success in England, but it is patent that most English took his official name as a mere abbreviation of Ruben Ishnajewich Stonehammercrushowsky. The English taste in music is remarkable; it is somewhat like their taste in fruit. They prefer hothouse grapes to natural ones. In the same way they prefer the piano music of Mendelmeier, called Bartholdy, to that of Stephen Heller or Volkmann. What they more particularly like are the 'Songs without Words' of that composer, which in reality are *Words without Songs*. His piano music is nothing but congealed respectability, or frozen *shockingitis*."

Aristoxenus, interrupting Alcibiades, exclaimed: "Do not, O son of Clinias, forget the man's marvellous compositions for the violin as well as for the orchestra. Diana frequently commands his *Midsummer Night's Dream* when she dwells with her nymphs in the mystic forest near Farnham Common, where Bartholdy composed it under the trees of Canute."

"You are quite right, O master of all Harmony, and I want to speak only of his piano music. The pianist at the concert had a very fine profile and beautiful hair. This helped him very much in a country where the sense of stylishness is exceedingly

acute. A coachman must have a broad back; a pianist, a fine profile; a violinist, long legs; a 'cellist, beautiful hands; and a lady singer, a vast promontory. Once these indispensable qualities are given, his or her music is practically a matter of indifference.

"The pianist then performing played well, as long as he played *forte* and *staccato*; but he had neither a *legato* nor, what was fatal, a *piano*, let alone a *pianissimo*. Fortunately his sense of rhythm was very well developed; otherwise he did not rise above a first prizeman of a conservatory.

"He played a transcription or two by Liszt. This the English condemn; it appears unlegitimate to them. To please them, one must play one of the last sonatas of Beethoven, preferably those composed after his death, that is, those that the man wrote when he had long lost the power of moulding his ideas in the cast of a sonata, and when his vitality had been ebbing away for years. A transcription stands to the original as does an engraving of an oil-colour picture or a statue to its original. Most people will enjoy a fine engraving of the *Transfiguration* or of Our Lady of Milo much more readily than they would the original; just as I now know that you gave us, O Zeus, great artists like Scopas, Praxiteles, Lionardo, or Domenichino, because we could not bear, nor comprehend the sight of the originals of their divine art, as long as we still move in our mortal coil. The transcription of some of the ideas of Mozart's *Don Juan* by Liszt is the best and most illuminating commentary on that incomparable opera.

"More interesting than the play were the remarks which I overheard from among the public. The men dwelt exclusively on the big sums of money the pianist

made by his 1526 recitals in 2000 towns of the United States. The profits they credited him with ranged from £15,000 to £100,000. A Viennese banker present drily remarked that he wished he could play the difference between the real and the imagined profits of the virtuoso on a fine Erard piano. The women made quite different remarks. Said one:

"'Herr Pianoforterewsky has been painted by royalty.'

"'Is that so?' said her neighbour. 'What an interesting face! I wish I could procure a photo of the picture.'

"'Do you know,' said a third, 'that Herr Pinaforewsky practises twenty-three hours a day? I know it on the best authority; his tuner told me so.'

"'Which tuner? Herr Pinacothekowsky, my dear, has three tuners: one for the high notes, the second for the middle ones, and the third for the low notes.'

"'How interesting! But suppose one of the tuners falls ill. What does he do then?'

"'Why, it's simple enough. In that case he only plays pieces requiring two of the three ranges of notes.'

"'How intensely interesting! But pray, if you do not take it amiss, my dear, I learnt that Herr Pedalewsky has only two tuners: one for the black keys, the other for the white ones.'

"'My dear, that was so in bygone times when he played sometimes a whole concert on the black keys alone, being 231 variations on Chopin's *Etude* on the black keys. But it made such a sad impression that some nasty critics said his piano was in mourning

black; other critics said that he was paid to do so by Mr Jay of Regent Street.'

"'How excruciatingly interesting! Do you know, my dear, I was told that Herr Polonorusky plays practically all the time, and even when he travels he carries with him a dumb piano on which he practises incessantly.'

"'How touching! I have heard that too, and believed it, until that atrocious man who writes for the *Bad Times* destroyed all my illusions. He said that if Herr Pantyrewsky did that, he would for ever spoil his touch. Just fancy that! It is not the touch, but the pose of that languid, Chopinesque profile over a dumb piano in a rattling car that was so interesting. And now that horrid journalist spoils it all. Nay, he added that the whole story was deliberately invented by the artist's manager.'

"'How distressingly interesting! You know, my dear, I will not believe the story about the manager. I know too much about the wonderful pianist. I have learnt at Marienbad that he had ten teachers at a time, one for each of his fingers, and that for five years he lived in a tiny village in Bavaria, because, don't you see, it was so central for the ten different cities where his teachers lived. For the thumb he rushed off to Frankfort on the Maine. There is no town like Frankfort for the study of the thumb. That's why they make such excellent sausages there which resemble a thumb to perfection. For the index he went to Rome. And so forth and so on. It is most marvellous.'

"All during that time," Alcibiades continued, "the pianist was playing the moonlight sonata of Beethoven. At the end of the piece, the ladies who

had carried on the lively conversation applauded wildly. 'Was it not marvellous?' said one to the other. 'Oh—delightful!' was the answer.

"So ended the concert. On leaving my seat I met Mrs Blazing.

"'*O mon cher*,' she said, 'why do all these women pretend to enjoy music? They very well know that not one of them cares for it in the least. I frankly admit that music to me is the anarchy of air, the French Revolution of sounds, acoustic bankruptcy. All our lives we have been taught to suppress our emotions, and to consider it ungenteel to express them in any way whatever. We were told that we must hide and suppress them—which we have done so successfully that after some time we resemble to a nicety the famous safe of Madame Humbert. And then, in flagrant contradiction to all this genteel education, we are supposed to accept with joy the moanings, cries, sobs, sighs, and other unsuppressed emotions of some middle-class Dutchman or Teuton dished up to us in the form of a sonata. It is too absurd for words.

"'If that lower-middle-class Dutchman Beethoven (or as my Cynthia calls him: "*Bête au vent*") wants to exhale his moral distress and sentimental indigestion, let him do so by all means, but in a lonely room. Why does he interfere with the even tenor of our well-varnished life? If my charming Japanese china figures, or my pretty girls and shepherds in *vieux Saxe* suddenly began to roar out their sentiments, I should have them destroyed or sold without any further ado. Why should I accept such roarings from an ugly, beer-drinking, unmannered Teuton? Why, I ask you?'

"'Music is the art of poor nations and poor classes. Outside a few Jews, no great musician came from among the rich classes; and Jews are socially impoverished. I can understand the attraction of ditties nursed in the music halls. They fan one with a gentle breeze of light tones, and here and there tickle a nerve or two. But what on earth shall we do with such *plesiosauri* as the monsters they call symphonies, in which fifty or sixty instruments go amuck in fifty different ways? The flute tries to serpentine round the bassoon in order to instil in it drops of deadly poison; the violins gallop recklessly *à la* Mazeppa against and over the violas and 'celli, while the brass darts forth glowing bombs falling with cruelty into the finest flower-beds of oboes and harps. It is simply the hoax of the century. Would you at Athens ever have endured such a pandemonium?'

"'You are quite right, *ma très charmante dame*," I said, 'we never had such music and we should have little cared for it. Our way of making symphonies was to write epics, crowded with persons, divine and human, and with events and incidents of all colours and shades. The Continental nations have lost the epic creativeness proper, and must therefore write epics in sound. Just as your languages do not allow you to write very strictly metred poetry such as we have written without impairing the fire and glamour of poetry, and the only way left for you of imitating the severe metres of Archilochus, Alcæus or Sappho is in the form of musical canons, fugues, or other counterpointed music. It seems to me that you English have not done much by way of music epics, because, like ourselves, you were busily engaged in writing epics of quite a different kind: the epic of

your Empire. The nations that have written musical epics, did do so at a time when these were the only epics they could write,—the symphony of Empire being refused them.'

"'I see,' said Mrs Blazing. 'You mean to say that our Mozarts and Beethovens are Lord Chatham, Clive, Nelson and Wellington?'

"'In a manner, yes. Few nations, if any, can excel both in arts and in Empire-making, and had you English been able to hold in your imperial power considerable parts of Europe, say, of France, Germany or Spain, you would never have had either Walter Scott or Byron, Shelley or Tennyson. For the efforts required to conquer and hold European territory would have taxed all your strength so severely that no resources would have been left for conquests in the realm of the arts and literature.

"'This is why the Romans, who conquered, not coloured races, but the mightiest white nations, could never write either great epics or great dramas. They wrote only one epic, one drama of first and to this day unparalleled magnitude: the Roman Empire. I meant to do a similar thing for Athens, but I failed. I now know why. My real enemies were not in the camp of my political adversaries, but in the theatre of Dionysus and in the schools of the philosophers. Do not, therefore, *ma chère amie*, begrudge the Germans their great musicians. They are really very great, and not even your greatest minds surpass, perhaps do not even equal them. Your consolation may be in this, that the Germans too will soon cease writing music worth the hearing. They now want to write quite different epics. And no nation can write two sorts of epics at a time.'

"'I am so glad to hear you say so,' said Mrs Blazing. 'It relieves me of a *corvée* that I hitherto considered to be a patriotic duty. I mean, I will henceforth never attend the representations of the new school of *soi-disant* English music. Inwardly I never liked it; it always appeared to me like an Englishwoman who tries to imitate the *grâce* and *verve* of a Parisian woman, with all her easy gestures, vivacious conversation, and delicate coquetry. It will not do.

"'We English women do not shine in movement; our sphere is repose. We may be troublesome, but never *troublante*.

"'Even so is English academic music. And I now see why it must be so. It is not in us, because another force takes its place. Like all people we like to shine in that wherein we are most deficient, and the other day I was present at a scene that could hardly be more painful. At the house of a rich and highly distinguished city man I met the famous Sir Somebody Hangar, the composer. The question arose who was the greatest musician? Thereupon Sir Somebody, looking up to the beautiful ceiling of the room, exclaimed dreamily: "Music is of *very* recent origin . . ." One of the gentlemen present then asked Sir Somebody whether he had ever heard the reply given to that question by the great Gounod? Sir Somebody contemptuously uttered: "Gounod? It is not worth hearing." I was indignant, and pointedly asked the gentleman to tell us Gounod's reply. The gentleman, looking at Sir Somebody with a curious smile, related:

"'Gounod, on being asked who in his opinion was the greatest musician, said: "When I was a boy of twenty, I said: *moi*. Ten years later I said: *moi et*

Mozart. Again ten years later I said: *Mozart et moi.* And now I say: *Mozart.*"'

"This reply," said Alcibiades, "has Attic perfume in it. Having suffered so much, as I have, at the hands of musicians in my time, when dramatic writers were as much musicians as dramatists, I have in my Olympian leisure carefully inquired into the real causes of the rise of modern music.

"'You said a few moments ago, *ma très spirituelle dame*, that music is the art of poor classes. There is this much truth in that, that modern music has indeed been almost entirely in the hands of middle-class people. This being so, everything depends on the nature and dispositions of the middle class in a given country. In England, for instance, the middle class is totally different from that of France or that of South Germany, the home of German music. The English middle class is cold, dry, *gaffeur* to the extreme, afflicted with a veritable rage for outward respectability, unsufferably formalist, and deeply convinced of its social inferiority. In such a class nothing remotely resembling German or French music can ever possibly arise. Such a class furnishes excellent business men, and reliable sergeants to the officers of imperial work. But music can no more grow out of it than can a rose out of a poker.

"'This middle class is the result of British Imperialism, and this is how Imperialism has prevented and will, as long as it lasts, always prevent the rise of really fine music in the higher sense of the term. This is also why we Hellenes never achieved greater results in music. Like the English, or the Americans, we never had a real *bourgeoisie*, or the only possible foster-earth of great music. However, *bourgeoisie*

is only a historic phenomenon, one that is destined to disappear, and with it will disappear all music. Mr Richard Strauss is singing its dirge.'"

When Alcibiades had finished his entertaining tale of women and music in England, the gods and heroes congratulated him warmly, and Zeus ordered that, under the direction of Mozart, all the nymphs and goddesses of the forests and seas shall sing one of the motets of Bach. This they did, and all Venice was filled with the magic songs, which were as pure as those produced by the nymph Echo in the Baptistry at Pisa. All the palaces and the churches of Venice seemed to listen with melancholy pleasure, and St Mark's hesitated to sound the hour lest the spell should be broken. When the motet was ended, the gods and heroes rose and disappeared in the heavens.

THE FIFTH NIGHT

CÆSAR ON THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

On the fifth night the gods and heroes assembled in the city of Rome. Their meeting-place was the Forum. The eternal city lay dormant around them, and Zeus, who had for the time recalled into existence the magnificent temple built in his honour, which used to adorn the incomparable centre of Roman might and splendour, sat in front of it, surrounded by the Flamines and the last Pontifex Maximus aided by the last Vestal Virgins. On the *via sacra* there was an unending flow of thronging Romans and Greeks, and Cicero was seen talking with great animation with Julius Cæsar, while Augustus seemed to chide Tacitus with mild irony. Cornelius Scipio Africanus was deeply engaged in a conversation with Pericles, and Marcus Antistius Labeo discussed law with Plato. From afar the wind brought the sounds of the bells of the Vatican, at the hearing of which all conversation stopped; and when a few minutes later a choir intoned a hymn in a neighbouring church, the Pontifex and the Flamines veiled their heads in dumb resignation, and the Vestal Virgins looked up to Zeus as if imploring him for help. A pause followed. But soon the moon rose over the majestic Palatine hill; the Graces performed a soulful dance, and finally Zeus asked Caius Julius Cæsar to entertain them

with his experiences during his third travel in England which, as he said, he had, in addition to his two landings during his mortal life, recently made after nearly two thousand years.

Cæsar, standing near the house of the Senate of ancient Rome, thus addressed the divine Assembly:

"It is, O Jupiter and all the other gods and heroes, a singular pleasure and honour to me to address you on a topic so important and interesting. When I arrived in England for the third time (—I started from Dunkerque to avoid giving offence to the 112 scholars who have, each to his complete satisfaction, proved 112 different spots on the French coast between Boulogne and Calais wherefrom I am supposed to have started for England in my mortal time—) I was received by no wilder tribe than a few customs officials, who asked me whether I had any cigars in my toga. On my denying it, they searched me, and finding none they let me go. Two hours later I arrived in London, which I found ugly beyond words. I can understand that you, O Canova, cried on seeing it. What struck me most was its surprising silence, which contrasted very strongly with the noise of Rome, or Paris. I mentioned this to a casual acquaintance, who stared at me in despair, exclaiming: 'Silence, sir? Why, the noises of London drive half of us to madness. Here, take that (—he handed me a bunch of printed papers—) read it carefully and join us.' On looking into the papers I found that they contained a prospectus of a vast 'Society for the Abatement of Street-Noises in London.'

"This made me somewhat thoughtful. It was

quite clear to me that the unattractiveness of London is owing chiefly to its lack of animation, to its silence. I soon found out that silence is the dominating institution of that country. To talk is to infringe the principal law of their language. They want to see their language noiselessly, and not to hear it. Hence they constantly read printed language on wooden paper, in a wooden style, on wooden matters. This they call 'the daily Press.' I met one of the chief writers on their most popular paper, and he assured me that the editor solemnly warns each of his contributors not to indulge in any attempt at *esprit* or brilliancy of any sort; for, should he do so, the editor would be forced to dismiss him forthwith. All that the contributor is allowed to do is to make startling headlines, such as:

'Delicious puddings made out of wood.'
'New aqueducts full of milk for the people.'
'Discovery of wireless telegraphy among the ancient Egyptians.'
'Discovery of the pin-cushion to Cleopatra's needles.'
'Trunk murder: a man assassinates his widow.'

That same editor, on my asking him why he allowed such crying stupidities in the headlines, and nothing but the most platitudinous stuff in the body of the article, gave me the following answer:

"'My dear sir, our public has nerves but no intellect. Hence we work for sudden, rapid shocks to their nerves, and no fatigue to their intellect. They not only do not think; they do not want to think. They are practically convinced that thinking

is the perdition of all common-sense. Just let me give you an example. There is among the younger writers one whose mind is singularly suggestive and nimble. He really has something to say, and can say it well. However, unfortunately, he says it in what are, apparently, contradictory and circuitous terms. This my readers cannot grasp; it fatigues them. They complain of that man's writings as being "heavy," "hard to follow." This is the consequence of the vogue of music halls. One may say that the popular University of this country, where the average man gets most of his ideas from, is the music hall. What, then, can we editors do better than imitate the style and substance of the music hall? Shocks to the nerves—and no fatigue to the intellect. *Voilà*!'

* * * * *

"On my way home I met Columbus. He told me, and no man ever spoke with more solid right, that he was the greatest benefactor to England. But for him, who by discovering the New World placed England in the very centre of the intelligent and wealthy nations, while formerly England was somewhere on the 'other end of all the world'; but for him, he said, England could never have had her unique leverage. 'You, Cæsar,' he added, 'discovered England, as the Vikings discovered America; I did not discover it, I made it. But would you believe me that thousands and thousands of Englishmen have scarcely ever heard my name? They

constantly talk of their race as born to rule. But what would they have ruled without me? The ponds in Lincolnshire. You wonder at their tongue-tiedness. I will tell you what it means. The English are neither talkers nor thinkers; they are almost exclusively men of action; or used to be. They have no intellectual initiative. They have started neither the Renascence, nor the Great Discoveries of my time, nor the Reformation, or the three greatest factors in the formation of modern Europe. All this was first started by us Italians. We can both talk and think and create; but we are not good at actions. The English are good only at action. This is the be-all and end-all of their history. Have you ever seen their Parliament? Do not omit attending it. You will there learn something that no other Assembly can teach you. It rarely contains a great orator, for oratory is of little use in an Assembly with an iron party discipline, and with members every one of whom is amenable to no argument that has not had the august privilege of being born in his own mind. And since his mind brings forth none, he moves in a vicious circle!'

"'Would you not,' I asked Columbus, 'accompany me to the House of Commons?'

"'Readily,' said the great Genoese. And next day we repaired to the 'first club of the country.'

* * * * *

"The hall was curiously unfit for the business of a national Assembly. It is neither large, nor light

enough. The acoustics are fair, but superfluous. For, who cares very much what any member other than himself is saying? In the midst there is a porter's lodge, in which sits a gentleman in the attire of the eighteenth century. This, as behoves a conservative Roman, did not meet with my disapproval. The only objection I made was that in my opinion he ought to have been clothed in all the various costumes in use since Magna Charta. The English, and the rest of the little ones, in utter contrast to ourselves, constantly vary their dress. We preferred to vary our inner selves.

"The subject of discussion, or rather of a score or so of monologues, was one of which in my time I have had the amplest experience. They proposed to give weekly a certain sum of money to anyone of their citizens who on reaching his seventieth year had arrived at the end of his financial tether. In my day I had given away millions to the populace, and my imperial successors had gone even very much further. The common people was thereby demoralised as is everybody, even parents, who accepts, year in year out, free gifts from a third person or his children. Being demoralised, such a recipient of donations becomes inevitably the most cruel enemy of his donor. Nothing contributed more to the downfall of Rome. A nation must consist of free and financially independent citizens, or it loses its most precious asset. How frequently, O Pericles, have you said to me, how much you regretted having introduced the same injurious donations into Athens. But this is the melancholy truth of all history: one learns from history one thing only, to wit, that no statesman has ever learned anything from history.

"In the midst of my sad reflections I could yet not help being amused by the speech of one member of the governing party, who belonged to that formidable mixture of faddists, formalists, cocksure-ists, and moral precisians who have in this country an influence that we should not have given to the members of the most exalted among the Roman patricians. Much as they are laughed at, they yet have the power of striking dread into the public and instilling hesitation into the feeble nerves of statesmen. The name of the orator in question was, if I am right, Harold Gox. He said:

"'Mr Speaker, it is with a satisfaction and self-complacency new even to me that I beg to submit my remarks on a subject than which there is no greater one; a subject, sir, that has no predicate except that of immensity; an immensity, sir, that exceeds infinitude itself; and last not least, an infinitude vaster than all other infinitudes: a moral infinity. This country, sir, was built up by morals and righteousness. Righteousness, I say, sir; and I will repeat it: righteousness. How did we come by our Empire? By righteousness. How did our colonists occupy vast continents? By righteousness. What was the guiding principle even of our national debt? Righteousness, in that we contracted it mainly by paying the foreigner to help us in beating our immoral enemies. Righteousness is the A and the Z of our glorious polity.

"'We cannot help being righteous; it is in us, over us, beside, beneath, and all through us. We have sometimes tried to be unrighteous; but, sir, we could not. It is not given to us, and we have only what is given to us.

"'Well then, sir, if that be so, as it undoubtedly is, beyond the shadow of a doubt; then I venture to say that any person that opposes the present bill of Old Age Pensions cannot but be an enemy of England, in that he is an enemy of righteousness.

"'What indeed, sir, can be fairer, juster, and more equitable than that they who have laboriously saved up a few sovereigns, should share them with those that have done everything in their power to have none?

"'Where there is nothing, there is death. Can a country introduce death as a regular constituent organ of its life? What in that case would righteousness do? She would blush green with shame, sir. Nothing would remain for her but to leave this country and to go to Germany or Turkey. Could we allow such a disaster? Would it not be necessary to hold or haul her back by ropes, strings, or any other instrument of our party machinery?

"'Just, pray, represent to yourself, sir, or to any other person, the actualities of the case. Here is a man of seventy. It is a noble feat of honourable perseverance to reach that age. It is, I make bold to submit, an evident proof of the favour and countenance of The Principle of All RIGHTEOUSNESS that the man was allowed to proceed so far.

"'He has worked all such days of his long life as he did not spend in reverential contemplation of the works of the Almighty. Who can blame him for that?

"'I go much further: who can possibly blame him for having focussed his attention rather on the liquid than on the solid bodies of Creation?

"'Each man has his own way of saying prayers.

"'Now, after having thus spent a long life in what has at all times been considered the essence of life; or as the ancient Romans used to formulate it, after having acted upon the noble doctrine of *ora et labora* (pray and work), he finds himself landed, or rather stranded in the wilderness of penury. Sir, such a state of things is untenable, unbearable, and unrighteous.

"'I know full well that people who have never given righteousness the slightest chance persist in repeating the old fallacy, that a labourer ought to save up for a rainy day. But, pray, sir, is it not perfectly clear that this principle is of Egyptian origin, and comes therefore from a country where there is no rain?

"'In England, sir, there are 362 rainy days a year; therefore 3620 rainy days in ten years, 18,100 rainy days in fifty years. How shall, I ask you, that unfortunate labourer, or grocer, or author, save up for 18,100 days? That takes a capital of at least £25,000. Well, who has that capital? No one. The nation alone has it. Ergo, the nation must pay for the rain.

"'I have, sir, in my locker a great many shots like the preceding, but I will, out of modesty, not use them all. I will only dwell on one point. Sir, our opponents contend that the money needed for Old Age Pensions is not available unless it be taken from funds much more necessary for the public welfare. Now I ask, which are those funds? The answer I receive is that the nation needs more defensive measures against possible invasions on the part of a Continental power.

"'Sir, on hearing such nonsense one is painfully reminded of what Lord Bacon used to say: "*Difficile est satiram non scribere.*"' (A voice from the Irish bench: 'Juvenal, and not Lord Bacon!') 'Well, Lord Percival, and not Lord Bacon, it amounts to the same.

"'An invasion? Sir, an invasion? How, for goodness' sake, do our opponents imagine such a thing to be possible? I know they say that Lord Roberts has declared an invasion of England a feasible thing. But has Lord Roberts ever invaded England? How can he know? How can anyone know?

"'They refer me to William the Conqueror. But, sir, is it not evident that William could not have done it had he not been the Conqueror? Being the Conqueror, he was bound to do it. Is there any such William amongst the Williams of the day? I looked them all up in the latest *Who's Who*—but not one of them came up to the requisite conditions.' (A voice: 'William Whiteley!') 'I hear, sir, the name of William Whiteley; and I reply that he is now too "Ltd." to undertake such a grand enterprise.

"'And more than anything else militating in my favour is the fact that the Germans do not so much as dream of doing this country the slightest harm. Look at the relationship between the Kaiser and the King; nephew and uncle. Who has ever heard that a nephew made war on an uncle? Take into consideration how the Kaiser behaved when lately visiting England. Did he not leave huge tips at Windsor? Did he not stroke children's cheeks? Did he not admire our houses? Who else has ever done that? He talked English all day long, and during part of the night. He read the *Daily Telegraph* and took

his tub every morning. Can there be stronger symptoms of his Anglophile soul?

"'A few weeks after he left England he went so far in his predilection of everything English that he even curtailed his moustaches.

"'His moustaches, sir, these the beacons of the German Empire, the hirsute hymn of Teutonia, her anchor, her lightning rod, her salvation!

"'To talk of such a man's hostile intentions against England is to accuse Dover Cliff, High Cliffe, or Northcliffe, or any other Cliff of base treachery. No, sir, there is no need of new expenses for defence on land; and as to the sea, we have only to follow the Chief Admiral's advice and go to sleep. Our principal force consists of our power to sleep on land as well as on sea. Once asleep, we can spend nothing. In that way there remains plenty of money for the Old Age Pensions, that glorious corrective of misery, that ventilator of property, and distillator of other men's pockets. I have not a word to add; the subject itself talks to every person of sense in a thousand tongues.'

"When the man had ended," Cæsar continued, "I asked one of the officials whether the orator was the clown of the house. The official looked daggers at me. He explained in a solemn voice that the orator was a staunch Liberal and Cobraite. The latter name was, I learnt, a little mistake in pronunciation; it ought to have been Cobdenite. Cobden, I was told, was a very great man. He succeeded in passing a measure which under the circumstances of his time was not altogether bad, although it drove the people away from the plough to the factories.

"However, he, like our Gracchi, imagined that

what was good for his time must necessarily be good for all times. On the basis of a complete ignorance of the Continent, that is, of the Power that has always been and always will be the real regulator of the fundamental policy of England, Cobden thought he had got hold of an absolute truth, instead of a merely passing and temporary measure. Like all nations that have never gone through social and political cataclysms and are necessarily highly conservative, the English are totally lacking in historic perspective. Men of the class of Cobden, or such as the orator I had heard, are like their most renowned thinker, Herbert Spencer, absolutely devoid of historic thinking. They think in categories of quantity and matter; never in quality made by history.

"Columbus, who was with me, said:

"'You need not be unusually excited over what you see. Each nation cuts a different caper to the riddles and problems of life. The French, who used to be *des hommes*, while at present alas! they are only *des omelettes*, were in their prime of an aggressive attitude to all that touched them; the Germans were of an idealising temper, while their present mood is rather a tampering ideal; the Americans are full of the exploiting fever; and the English invariably take up a posture of expectativeness.

"'They pretend to believe what the Spartan King Archidamus always said: "One cannot by reasoning disentangle the future." This attitude pays the English best. First they let it be proved by the Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, and more particularly by the French that India can be conquered, and then—they take it. Even so with Egypt, Canada,

the West Indies, and South Africa. Expectativeness is their motto.

"'When I came to England trying to persuade them to help me in the discovery of America, they acted the wise Archidamus, and would not give me linen for one sail. When I had discovered it, then they took as much of it, and more than they could swallow. This method of expectativeness has had much historic quality, to use your words, O Cæsar, for a time. But I am afraid it is beginning to be worn out.

"'I for one know (and have you, and Pericles, and Joan of Arc, and Napoleon, and so many others not told me the same thing when we used to meet, at the wish of Joan, at Rheims Cathedral?), I for one know what these little ones do not even dream of, so infatuated are they with the power of Reason and Science and similar machinery, namely, that our force to forefeel things of the future is far greater, at least in some of us, than our capacity to analyse or comprehend things of the present or the past. Our whole being is not so much an upshot of the past as a projection of the future. Hence the astounding assurance with which all of us now assembled in Olympus felt in advance what later on we actually did carry out. I should have discovered America had it never existed; as I actually discovered it thinking that I discovered the eastern side of Asia.'

"I very well see," said Cæsar, "what you mean. The English have no forefeeling of things to come. They do not note that their whole situation in historic space has in the last generation completely changed, and that therefore their old method of expectativeness, which lived mainly on the blunders

of other nations, has become quite obsolete. They are where we were after Zama, after the end of the Second Punic War, or the end of the third century B.C., as they say. So they are at the end of their second Hundred Years' War with France. But while we distinctly felt that after the Carthaginians, whom we had defeated, we were inevitably compelled to reduce the Macedonians, and not shrinking from our heavy task we did defeat them, though with tremendous effort; the English do shrink from doing what the uncommon sense of the future as well as the common sense of the present but too clearly tell them to do.

"The blunder of France and Spain which was the chief ally of England in former times, I mean, the blunder of these great nations in making war on England only at times when they had four to ten other wars on hand; that capital blunder the dominating Power of this moment will never commit.

"Germany will not embroil herself in any Continental war while fighting England. This is indisputable.

"For the first time in modern times England will be at grips with a first-class Continental Power which is in a position to concentrate all her strength on England. This completely novel situation requires completely novel methods of meeting it. Yet, the average Englishman is quite unaware of all that. What ruined mighty Macedon? Not the lack of a powerful army, since our oldest generals, such as Æmilius Paulus, trembled at the thunderlike onslaught of the famous Macedonian *phalanx*, or infantry. But instead of joining the Carthaginians full-heartedly while we smarted under the scourge of

Hannibal, they misread the whole situation and waited, and waited, until—we were able to concentrate upon them, even to incorporate the best Greek forces in our armies, and the end was disaster for Macedon.

"Just listen to the speech now going on. The Leader of the Opposition is speaking.

* * * * *

"'Mr Speaker, I am broadly astonished at the statements of the hon. member for Alarmville, who has just painted the international horizon in tints of Indian ink. I cannot imagine where he takes his tints from. Does he want to pose as a political Tintoretto?'

"(Much applause—most members send for the *Encyclopædia Imperialis* to find out what *Tintoretto* means.)

"'The horizon, as everybody knows, is only an imaginary line, and each man has his own horizon. If therefore the horizon of the hon. member be as black as jet, I have not much to say against it, and will send him my condolences. But why should he obtrude his horizon on that of all the rest of peace-loving humanity? I also have my horizon.'

"(The hon. member: 'Horizons, if you please.')

"'Horizons? More than one horizon? Perhaps; it probably needs more than one to descend to that of the hon. member.'

"(Opposition members: 'Deucedly clever, by Jove!')

"'On my horizon I see no cloud, no vapours, no

foundations of any belief in storms or tempests of any kind. What conceivable reason should the Germans have for attacking us? I fail, I utterly fail to see it. I know that my adversaries say that whatever reasons Germany may or may not have to attack us, we, these people say, we have a plethora of motives to attack them. This point, this argument is so devoid of point or argument, that I cannot waste the time of the House in refuting it. It refutes itself. Why should we attack the Germans? Because we have no reasons to do so. That is all that one can advance. Do we want their colonies? Why, we are eternally obliged to them for having taken them and so rid us of a sterile investment. Do we want part of Germany? Neither parts nor the whole of it. Have we not ceded to them Heligoland? Sir, it is, as I said, impossible to detect a single argument in favour of our attacking Germany. The minds that counsel such a violent measure are influenced by apprehensions arising out of future developments. They are anticipative souls to whom the secrets of the future have been revealed by the timorousness of the present. I respect souls; I respect timorousness; but I refuse to attribute to it any oracular wisdom. The future is dark, three shades darker than the present, which is impenetrable enough as it is.

"'There remains, then, only the other alternative: Germany seriously means to attack us. Well, sir, let us analyse this statement. What earthly good would such an attack do to the Germans? I hear they covet Denmark and Holland, as the natural outlets of their Empire which at present is like a muffled head; and since England cannot permit their

taking possession of Denmark and Holland, the Germans must fight England. This argument, sir, lacks all the elements of truth. It lacks geographical force, historical momentum, political sense. Denmark, we all know, is quite in the east of Germany between the Elbe river and the Lake of Baikal.'

"(Uproarious hilarity in parts of the House. A voice: 'Lake Baikal is in Siberia!')

"'I hear, sir, Lake Baikal is in Siberia. As if I had not known it, sir! I say Baikal as the scientific term of Baltic, which is in reality Bi-Kalic, or rapidly speaking: Baikal.'

"(Opposition members: 'Deucedly clever—he got out of *that* scrape!')

"'Denmark which, as I said, is in the east of Germany does not muffle her at all. It is a highly artistic country and in the Bay of Catgut are fished the best strings for violins.'

"(A voice: 'Sound of Kattegat!')

"'I hear, sir, that it is the Sound of Kattegat, but I think every patriotic Englishman says Catgut. But to return to my argument: the Germans being very musical, love violins, and consequently love the Kattegat, as the hon. voice says, and love the Danes. As long as the Danes give their fine catguts, the Germans will certainly not think of doing them any harm.'

"(An angry voice: 'But Denmark is in the north of Germany!')

"'I hear, sir, that Denmark has moved from her ancient moorings. If that be so, then I can only conclude that Germany has still less reason to covet the possession of Denmark. For, is it not clear, or

luce clarius, that Denmark is a sort of nightcap to Germany? The Germans themselves typify their nation as a *Deutscher Michel* (Teuton Michael) with a nightcap on his head. Why, this nightcap is Denmark. The Teuton likes a nightcap.'

"(General laughter.)

"'All Teutons do.'

"(Renewed laughter.)

"'Need I say more?

"'And as to Holland, I am bound to say that it passes my comprehension how anyone can seriously maintain that Germany covets Holland. I hear that she covets Holland because it is exasperating to a great Power like Germany that the entire delta of her greatest river, the Rhine, belongs to a small and hostile Power. It is asked of me, how I, or for the matter of that any Englishman, would like to see the mouth of the Thames in the power of the Belgians? Sir, I should not like to see that, to be sure. But the case is quite different. We English have no river like the Rhine, which in its upper course gives the most generous wine, and in its lower course is nothing but a vile combination of hydrogen and oxygen, commonly called water. If, for better illustration, the Thames in her upper course gave the finest whisky——'

"(Great uproar among two-thirds of the members, all teetotallers.)

"'Or, I beg your pardon, ginger beer or cyder, we should not greatly mind to whom the lower course belonged. But, sir, it is a well-known and a most patriotic fact that the Thames river contains nothing else than water. Water, sir, is the panacea of this nation!'

"(Violent applause from two-thirds of the House.)

"'Yes, the panacea, the salvation, the resurrection, and the rehabilitation of this country.'

"(Cries: 'Righteousness!—Righteousness!')

"'We cannot get enough of it. Water in our throats—in our papers, books, and speeches. Water in our dramas, novels, drugs; water, water—three kingdoms for water!'

"(Wild and frantic applause of the whole House.)

"'Now, sir, I maintain all this does not hold good with our friends the Germans. They do drink wine and beer and schnapps. They cannot be without them. Their Rhine gives them wine in plenty in that part of its course which belongs to them. What does it, what can it matter to them to whom the lower part of the Rhine, full of mere water, does or does not belong?'

"('Hear! Hear!')

"'The Germans are a practical nation. Does any person; I say more than that, *can* any person say that the Germans will wage a great war in order to possess themselves of water, when all that time they already have excellent wine? I could understand, sir, that if the Germans occupied the watery mouth of the Rhine only, and not its middle and upper course full of noble wine——'

"(Several voices: 'Order! Order! Retract noble.')

"'Well, well, the House will allow me to say "noble" wine, inasmuch as wine has not only four or fourteen quarters, but innumerable ones.'

"(Opposition cries: 'Excellent! deucedly clever!')

"'To return to my argument: I could understand that the Germans, if they had only the lower course of the Rhine, would forthwith wage war to acquire

the middle and upper course of the river. We learn from Tacitus that they are a very thirsty nation, and this authentic news is, as readers of more modern authors tell me, not given the lie by the contemporary Germans either. But under the existing circumstances the Rhine—or Hock—argument, meant to prove German hostility, falls into the water near the Dutch border, wherever that may be.

"'There is finally, sir, another so-called argument *re* Holland and Germany. It is stated that the Germans covet Holland on account of the Dutch colonies in Asia and South America. These colonies, as everybody knows, are exiguous.'

"(An angry voice: 'About 800,000 English square miles.')

"'I hear, sir, the Dutch colonies are about 800,000 English square miles. Of course, my information is taken from Tacitus; and no doubt since his time some additions have been made to the colonial microcosm of the Dutch. But even if that were so, and if the Dutch actually possessed 800,000 square miles of colonies, it is quite patent that these colonies, if not exiguous in extent, are exiguous in value: otherwise they would long ago have been governed from Downing Street.'

"(Approving laughter—half of the members smile knowingly, while the other half pat themselves on the backs of their neighbours.)

"'Do you mean to tell me that the Germans will wage an immense war for the sake of what we have not deigned to pick up? They are, I know, past masters in the use of offals for purposes of food and drink. But surely in matters of politics they want more than offals.

"'At the risk of wearying hon. members I should like to add just a remark or two on another argument of the alarmists. We have seen the Danish argument; the Hock argument; and the Dutch colonies argument. There remains one more: the aerial argument. I hear from my valet that one Chaplin or Zebraline has made a flight or two through the air.'

"(Voices: 'Zeppelin!')

"'I hear, sir, his name is Zeppelin; probably an abbreviation of Mazeppaline, whom Lord Byron has sung so well.'

"(Opposition members: 'Deucedly clever!')

"'The flight of Mazeppa has naturally much agitated the Germans, all of whom can read English. If they could not, what else would they read? I have never heard of a German literature.

"'But to resume: the Germans, excited by *Mazeppa* behold in Herr Zeppelin an aerial Mazeppa. That is all, as the French say. But, sir, is it likely that Herr Zeppelin will so perfect his balloon or airship as to make it available for the transportation of an army corps or two to England? Suppose he could do so; what would be simpler than to render his aerial landing in this country impossible? We have simply to refuse him a patent for the British Empire, and lo! he can never set foot on the clouds of England.

"'But the alarmists say that even if Zeppelin's airship could not carry over whole army corps, they might very well serve for German scouts and spies, who might explore the secret preparations and defensive measures made by this country on land.

"'Well, sir, this apparently strong argument has not an atom of vitality in it; and for the simplest

of reasons too. The Germans might send their trustiest Zeppelin No. 10 or No. 50, with their best trained scouts in it. These scouts might pry into anything in the shape of military preparations in England; but they will never discover anything.

"'Why, sir, this is why we make no preparations. We do that simply to nullify any possible Zeppelin.'

"('Hear! Hear! Deucedly clever.')

"'Some critics say that we have lost the old bold imperialist spirit. But, sir, is it not evident that we are to-day of a greater military spirit than we ever were formerly? Feeble nations, in order to secure peace, constantly prepare for war; or as the Latin adage holds it: "*Si vis pacem para bellum.*" We, on the other hand, make no preparations for war, because we are so strong as to consider war or peace with equal equanimity. To sum up: the aerial argument has no more force in it than the other arguments of the alarmists. If a modern William the Conqueror should be able to conquer the air, and by a modern battle of Hazetings (deucedly clever!) enter the mid-air of this country, he will find Heroes and not Harolds to contest every square inch of Margate winds, of Lincolnshire rain, or of London smoke. This country, sir, can be subjugated neither by land, nor by sea, nor by air. Over these three elements hovers and reigns supreme the indomitable spirit of the race.'

"(Tremendous applause.)

* * * * *

"When the speech of the Leader of the Opposition was ended, Columbus turned to me," continued Cæsar, "and said: 'I have no doubt, O Cæsar, that you are fairly sickened by that speech. But, pray, consider that every word of it was framed and uttered, not to discuss seriously the German danger, but to get back into power. The speaker is neither so ignorant nor so foolish as he appears. He made a special effort to appear absolutely ignorant of geography, because the party in power has won great renown by an imposing ignorance in that subject. You must not smile. I say deliberately, imposing. The English hate geography, maps, atlases, globes. Even in the examinations for the diplomatic service they do not admit geography as a subject.

"'Being convinced of the exclusive importance of their own country, they are simply bored with geographical considerations of any other country. Some time ago it occurred that not one member of the House knew whether British Guiana was an island or a peninsula. Of course, it is neither. It belongs to the *bon ton* to be ignorant of all geography; that is, to treat Germany or Denmark or Russia as if one spoke of some internal province of the Chinese Empire. For similar reasons, the speaker affected not to see the slightest danger from Germany. The party in power was elected by the people mainly on the ground that with the Goody-Goody ones "in," and the Imperialists "out," the people were safe not to be embroiled in a European war. In order to take the wind out of the tattered sail of Pacifism the speaker acted as if the Germans did not so much as dream of doing England any harm.'

"All this is most disheartening," said Cæsar. "To treat foreign policy merely as a card in the little game of electioneering is most injurious to the interests of a great country. England, like every other country in Europe, has been made in her Downing Street rather than at the polls or in Committee-rooms. European currents determine the minor currents of the home policies of the several countries. You say, and with the utmost right, O Columbus, that you have given the English their most powerful leverage. But would you have thought of doing what you did do, had not a vast event in South-eastern Europe, the coming of the Turk, driven your countrymen to the discovery of a western route, the eastern being closed by the Turk?

"I wish the Parthians in mid-Asia, in my time, had been as strong as the Turks were in your time. We should have had you while I lived, and by the discovery of America over fifteen hundred years before you did discover it, the whole trend of the world's history would have been different. For you would have given this immense new leverage to the Roman Empire instead of to little England. It is rather amusing to hear the English talk of the 'Unspeakable Turk,' a nation to whom they are, if indirectly, more obliged than to any other nation of the past or present, excepting the French.

"The truth is, that no nation makes itself. It is made by itself only in so far as it reacts against the powerful influence of the others, its neighbours and their neighbours. If these neighbours are feeble, and second-rate nations, the reacting nation itself will remain feeble and second-rate. The greatness

of the present Germans is a veritable godsend to the English, since the decadence of the French. By reacting against it properly, England will be newly invigorated.

"The scribblers of the little ones ascribe the downfall of the Empire which I founded to the rottenness of my Romans. How untrue! My Empire decayed because, comprising as it did all the then known civilised nations, it lacked a great adversary by reacting against whom it might have re-invigorated itself from time to time. They say the Barbarians, chiefly the Teutons, overpowered us. Alas! I wish they had been much stronger than they were. They never overpowered us. Had the Greeks and Macedonians been able to concert great military measures against us, we should have been forced to give up the fatal idea of an all-compassing Empire, and should have finally arrived at a fine and vitalising balance of power in the Mediterranean.

"The English ought to welcome, although to combat the rise of Germany. They imagine that their principal force comes from their colonies. It will come, not from their colonies, which is geographically impossible, but from their perennial rivalry with great Continental Powers. These rivalries made England, made her colonies. To give up these rivalries, to cease combating great Continental Powers, will be the end both of England and her Empire. In my time I, together with all my friends, gloried in my long-drawn conquest of Gaul, and my final victory over the leader of the Gauls, Vercingetorix. I now wish I had been defeated at Alesia, and a strong and united Gaul had been established under my unlucky adversary. What

inestimable centre of healthy rivalry would Gaul not have been for us! To try to conquer it was right; to have definitely deprived it of independence was a disaster. Strifeless bliss prospers only in Olympus."

THE SIXTH NIGHT

APOLLO AND DIONYSUS IN ENGLAND[1]

It is many years ago that in the Bodleian at Oxford I was shown into the beautiful room where John Selden's noble library is placed. It is a lofty, well-proportioned room, and on the walls are arrayed the silent legions of the great scholar's books.

At that time I was still fonder of books than of realities, and with breathless haste I ran over the title-pages and contents of the grand folios in over fifteen languages, written by scholars of all the Western nations and of many an Oriental people.

Then I paused before the fine oil-painting near the entrance of the room representing the face and upper body of the scholar-patriot. The face is singularly, touchingly beautiful. The delicately swung lines of the lips tell at once, more especially in their discreet corners, of the deep reticence and subtle tact of the man. No wonder my Lady Kent loved him. The combination of political power, boundless erudition, and charming male beauty could not but be pleasing to a knowing woman of the world. His eyes, big and lustrous, yet veil more than they reveal. He evidently was a man who saw more than he expressed, and felt more than he cared to show. Living in the troublous times of James the First and Charles the

[1] Reprinted, with permission, from the *Nineteenth Century and After* for July 1908.

First, he worked strenuously for the liberties of his country, while all the time pouring forth works of the heaviest erudition on matters of ancient law, religions, and antiquities.

His printed works are, in keeping with the custom of his day, like comets: a small kernel of substance, appended to a vast tail of quotations from thousands of authors. Like the unripe man I was, I liked the tail more than the kernel. Yet I had been in various countries and had acquired a little knowledge of substance.

And as I gazed with loving looks at the mild beauty of the scholar, I fell slowly into a reverie. I had read him and about him with such zeal that it seemed to me I knew the man personally. Then also I had walked over the very streets and in the very halls where he had walked and talked to Camden, Cotton, Archbishop Ussher, Sir Mathew Hale, Lord Ellesmere, Coke, Cromwell. It was the period that we, in Hungary, had been taught to admire most in all English history.

And there was more particularly one maxim of Selden's, which he carefully wrote on every one of the books of his library, which had always impressed me most.

It ran: "Liberty above everything"; or as he wrote it, in Greek: *περὶ παντὸς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν.*

Yes, liberty—that is, political liberty—above everything else. I had, like all people born in the fifties of the last century, believed in that one idea as one believes in the goodness and necessity of bread and wine. I could not doubt it; I thought, to doubt it was almost absurd. And so I had long made up my mind to go one day to Oxford and to make my reverent

bow to the scholar who had adorned the shallowest book of his vast collection by writing on it the Greek words in praise of liberty.

However, before I could carry out my pilgrimage to the Bodleian, I had been five years in the States. There indeed was plenty of political liberty, but after a year or so I could not but see that the sacrifices which the Americans had to make for their political liberty were heavy, very heavy, not to say crushing.

And I began to doubt.

I conceived that it was perhaps not impossible to assume that in Selden's maxim there were certain "ifs" and certain drawbacks. My soul darkened; and when finally I arrived at the Bodleian, I went into Selden's room, and to his portrait, prompted by an unarticulated hope that in some way or other I might get a solution of the problem from the man whose maxim I had held in so great esteem for many a long year.

So I gazed at him, and waited. The room became darker; the evening shadows began spreading about the shelves. The portrait alone was still in a frame of strangely white light. It was as if Apollo could not tear himself away from the face of one who had been his ardent devotee.

After a while I observed, or thought I did, with a sensation of mingled horror and delight, that the eyes of the portrait were moving towards me. I took courage and uttered my wish, and asked Selden outright whether now, after he had spent centuries in the Elysian fields with Pericles and Plato, whether he still was of opinion that liberty, political liberty, is the chief aim of a nation, an aim to be secured at all prices.

Thereupon I clearly saw how his eyes deepened, and how the surface of their silent reserve began to ripple, as it were, and finally a mild smile went over them like a cloud over a Highland lake.

That smile sent a shiver through my soul. Selden, too, doubts his maxim? Can political liberty be bought at too great a price? Are there goods more valuable than political liberty?

After I recovered from my first shock, I boldly approached the smiling portrait, and implored Selden to help me.

And then, in the silence of the deserted room, I saw how his lips moved, and I heard English sounds pronounced in a manner considerably different from what they are to-day. They sounded like the bass notes of a clarionet, and there was much more rhythm and cadence in them than one can hear to-day. They were also of exquisite politeness, and the words were, one imagined, like so many courtiers, hat in hand, bowing to one another, yet with a ready sword at the side.

To my request he replied: "If it should fall out to be your fervent desire to know the clandestine truth of a matter so great and weighty, I shall, for the love of your devotion, be much pleased to be your suitor and help. Do not hesitate to follow me."

With that he stepped out from the frame and stood before me in the costume of the time of the Cavaliers. He took me by the hand, and in a way that seemed both natural and supernatural, so strangely did I feel at that moment, we left unseen and unnoticed the lofty room, and arrived almost immediately after that at a place in the country that

reminded me of Kenilworth, or some other part of lovely Warwickshire.

It was night, and a full moon shed her mysteries over trees, valleys, and mountains. On a lawn, in the midst of a fine wood of alders, Selden halted.

There were several persons present. They struck me as being Greeks; their costume was that of Athenians in the time of Alcibiades. I soon saw that I was right, for they talked ancient Greek. Selden explained to me that they had left Elysium for a time, in order to see how the world beneath was going on. In their travels they had come to England, and were anxious to meet men of the past as well as men of the present, and to inquire into the nature and lot of the nation of which they had heard, by rumour, that it had something of the nature of the Athenians, much of the character of the Spartans, a good deal of the people of Syracuse and Tarentum, and also a trait or two of the Romans.

Of those Greeks I at once recognised Pericles, the son of Xanthippus; Alcibiades, the son of Clinias; Plato, the son of Ariston; Euripides, the son of Mnesarchos; moreover, a man evidently an *archon* or high official of the oracle of Delphi; and in the retinue I saw sculpturesque maidens of Sparta and charming women of Argos, set off by incomparably formed beauties of Thebes, and girls of Tanagra smiling sweetly with stately daintiness.

Selden was received by them with hearty friendliness, and conversation was soon at its best, just as if it had been proceeding in the cool groves of the Academy at Athens.

The first to speak was Pericles. He expressed to Selden his great amazement at the things he had seen in England.

"Had I not governed the city of holy Athena for thirty years," he said, "I should be perhaps pleased with what I see in this strange country. But having been at the head of affairs of a State which in my time was the foremost of the world; and having always availed myself of the advice and wisdom of men like Damon, the musician-philosopher, Anaxagoras, the thinker, Protagoras, the sophist, and last, not least, Aspasia, my tactful wife and friend, I am at a loss to understand the polity that you call England.

"What has struck me most in this country is the sway allowed to what we used to call Orphic Associations. In Athens we had, in my time, a great number of private societies the members of which devoted themselves to the cult of extreme, unnatural, and un-Greek ideas and superstitions. Thus we had *thiasoi*, as we called them, the members of which were fanatic vegetarians; others, again, who would not allow their adherents to partake of a single drop of Chian or any other wine; others, again, who would under no circumstances put on any woollen shirt or garment.

"But if any of these Orphic mystagogues had arrogated to themselves the right of proposing laws in the Public Assembly, or what this nation calls the Parliament, with a view of converting the whole State of Athens into an Association of Orphic rites and mysteries, then, I am sure, my most resolute antagonists would have joined hands with me to counteract such unholy and scurrilous attempts.

"I can well understand that the Spartans, who are quite unwilling to vest any real power whatever in either their kings, their assembly, their senate, or their minor officials, are consequently compelled to vest inordinate power in their few Ephors, and in the constantly practised extreme self-control of each individual Spartan. In a commonwealth like Sparta, where the commune is allowed very little, or no, power; where there are neither generals, directors of police, powerful priests or princes, nor any other incumbents of great coercive powers; in such a community the individual himself must needs be his own policeman, his own priest, prince, general, and coercive power. This he does by being a vegetarian, a strict Puritan, teetotaller, melancholist, and universal killer of joy."

Here Pericles was interrupted by the suave voice of Selden, who, in pure Attic, corroborated the foregoing statements by a reference to the people called Hebrews in Palestine. "These men," Selden said, "were practically at all times so fond of liberty that they could not brook any sort of government in the form of officials, policemen, soldiers, princes, priests, or lords whatever. In consequence of which they introduced a system of individual self-control called ritualism, by means of which each Hebrew tied himself down with a thousand filigree ties as to eating, drinking, sleeping, merrymaking, and, in short, as to every act of ordinary life. So that, O Pericles, the Hebrews are one big Orphic Association of extremists, less formidable than the Spartans, but essentially similar to them."

Selden had scarcely finished his remarks, when Alcibiades, encouraged by a smile from Plato,

joined the discussion, and, looking at Pericles, exclaimed:

"My revered relative, I have listened to your observations with close attention; and I have also, in my rambles through this country, met a great number of men and women. It seems to me that but for their Orphic Associations, which here some people call Societies of Cranks and Faddists, the population of this realm would have one civil war after the other.

"Surely you all remember how, in my youth, misunderstanding as I did the Orphic and mystery-craving nature of man, I made fun of it, and was terribly punished for it at the hands of Hermes, a god far from being as great as Zeus, Apollo, or Dionysus. Little did I know at that time that the exuberance of vitality, which I, owing to my wealth and station in life, could gratify by gorgeous chariot races at Olympia under the eyes of all the Hellenes, was equally strong, but yet unsatisfied, in the average and less dowered citizens of my State.

"My chequered experience has taught me that no sort of people can quite do without Orphic mysteries, and when I sojourned among the Thracians, I saw that those barbarians, fully aware of the necessity of Mysteries and Orphic Trances, had long ago introduced festivals at which their men and women could give free vent to their subconscious, vague, yet powerful chthonic craving for impassioned day-dreaming and revelry. They indulge in wild dances on the mountains, at night, invoking the gods of the nether world, indulging freely in the wildest form of boundless hilarity, and rivalling in their exuberance the mad sprouting of trees and herbs in spring.

"You Laconian maidens, usually so proud and cold and Amazonian, I call upon you to say whether in your strictly regulated polity of Sparta you do not, at times, rove in the wildest fashion over the paths, ravines, and clefts of awful Mount Taygetus, in reckless search of the joy of frantic vitality which your State ordinarily does not allow you to indulge in? And you women of Argos, are you too not given to wild rioting at stated times? Have I not watched you in your religious revivals of fierce joy?"

Both the Laconian and Argive women admitted the fact, and one of them asked: "Do the women of this country not observe similar festivals? I pity them if they don't."

And a Theban girl added: "The other day we passed over Snowdon and other mounts in a beauteous land which they call Wales. It is much like our own holy Mount Kithæron. Why, then, do the women of this country not rove, in honour of the god, over the Welsh mountains, free and unobserved, as we do annually over wild Kithæron? They would do it gracefully, for I have noticed that they run much better than they walk, and they would swing the *thyrsus* in their hand with more elegance than the sticks they use in their games."

At that moment there arose from the haze and clouded mystery of the neighbouring woods a rocket of sounds, sung by female voices and soon joined in the distance by a chorus of men. The company on the lawn suddenly stopped talking, and at the bidding of the Delphic archon, whom they called Trichas, they all went in search of ivy, and, having found it, wreathed themselves with it. The

music, more and more passionate, came nearer and nearer.

From my place I could slightly distinguish, in mid-air, a fast travelling host of women in light dresses, swinging the *thyrsus*, dancing with utter freedom of beautiful movement, and singing all the time songs in praise of Dionysus, the god of life and joy.

Trichas solemnly called upon us to close our eyes, and he intoned a *pæan* of strange impressiveness, imploring the god to pardon our presence and to countenance us hereafter as before.

But the Laconian, Theban, and Argive maidens left us, and soaring into air, as it were, joined the host of revelling women.

After a time the music subsided far away, and nothing could be heard but the melodious soughing of the wind through the lank alder-trees.

* * * * *

Then, at a sign of Trichas, Plato took the word and said:

"You are aware, my friends, that whatever I have taught in my Athenian days regarding the punishment of our faults at the hands of the Powers of the Netherworld, all that has been amply visited upon me in the shape of commentaries written on my works by learned teachers, after the fashion of savages who tattoo the beautiful body of a human being.

"I may therefore say that I have at last come to a state of purification and castigation which allows

one to see things in their right proportion. Thus, with regard to this curious country in which we are just at present, I cannot but think that while there is much truth in what all of you have remarked, yet you do not seem to grasp quite clearly the essence, or, as we used to say, the *οὐσία* of the whole problem.

"This nation, like all of us Hellenes, has many centuries ago made up its mind to keep its political liberty intact and undiminished. For that purpose it always tried to limit, and in the last three hundred years actually succeeded in limiting, or even destroying, most of the coercive powers of the State, the Church, the nobility, the army. Selden not improperly compared them to the Jews. And as in the case of the Jews, so in the case of the English, the lack of the coercive powers of State, Church, nobility, and army inevitably engendered coercive powers of an individual or private character.

"This is called, in a general word, Puritanism. Our Spartans, who would not tolerate public coercive corporate powers any more than do the English, were likewise driven into an individual Puritanism, called their *ἀγωγή*, which likewise consisted of fanatic teetotalism, *mutisme*, anti-intellectualism, and other common features.

"This inevitable Puritanism in England assumed formerly what they call a Biblical form; now it feeds on teetotalism—that is, it has become liquid Puritanism. I have it on the most unquestionable authority, that the contemporary Britons are, in point of consumption of spirits and wine, the most moderate consumers of all the European nations; and the average French person, for example, drinks

152 times more wine per annum than the average Englishman. Even in point of beer, the average Belgian, for instance, drinks twice as much as the average Englishman; while the average Dane drinks close on five times more spirits than the average Briton.

"Yet all these facts will convert no one. For, since the Puritan wants Puritanism and not facts, he can be impressed only by inducing him to adopt another sort of Puritanism, but never by facts.

"Accordingly, they have introduced Christian Science, or one of the oldest Orphic fallacies, which the Mediæval Germans used to call 'to pray oneself sound.' They have likewise inaugurated anti-vivisectionism, vegetarianism, anti-tobacconism, Sabbatarianism, and a social class system generally, which combines all the features of all the kinds of Puritanism.

"We in Athens divided men only on lines of the greater or lesser political rights we gave them; but we never drew such lines in matters social and purely human. The freest Athenian readily shook hands with a *metic* or denizen; and we ate all that was eatable and good. In England the higher class looks upon the next lower as the teetotaller looks upon beer, the vegetarian upon beef, or the Sabbatarian upon what they call the Continental Sunday.

"Moreover, there is in England, in addition to the science of zoology or botany, such as my hearer Aristotle founded it, a social zoology and botany, treating of such animals and plants as cannot, according to English class Puritanism, be offered to one's friends at meals. Thus, mussels and cockles are socially ostracised, except in unrecognisable form;

bread is offered in homœopathic doses; beer at a banquet is simply impossible; black radishes, a personal insult.

"In the same way, streets, squares, halls, theatres, watering-places—in short, everything in the material universe is or is not 'class'; that is, it is subject or not subject to social Puritanism. All this, as in the case of the Hebrews, who have an infinitely developed ritualism of eatables and drinkables, of things 'pure' or 'impure'; all this, I say, is the inevitable consequence of the unwillingness of the English to grant any considerable coercive power to the State, the Church, the nobility, the army, or any other organised corporate institution.

"They hate the idea of conscription, because they hate to give power to the army, and prefer to fall into the snares of faddists.

"The coercive power which they will not grant in one form, they must necessarily admit in another form. They destroy Puritanism as wielded by State or Church, and must therefore, since coercive powers are always indispensable, accept it as Puritanism of fads.

"What are the Jews other than a nation of extreme faddists? Being quite apolitical, as we call it, they must necessarily be extremely Orphic—that is, extreme Puritans.

"Political liberty is bought at the expense of social freedom. Nobody dares to give himself freely and naively; he must needs watch with sickly self-consciousness over every word or act of his, as a policeman watches over the traffic of streets. And lest he betray his real sentiments, he suppresses

all gestures, because gestures give one away at once. One cannot make a gesture of astonishment without being really astonished at all, and *vice versâ*.

"And so slowly, by degrees, the whole of the human capital is repressed, disguised, unhumanised, and, in a word, sacrificed at the altar of political liberty.

"The Romans, much wiser than the Spartans, gave immense coercive power both to corporate bodies, such as the Roman Senate, and to single officials, such as a Consul, a Censor, a Tribune, or a Prætor. They therefore did not need any grotesque private coercive institutions or fads.

"The English, on the other hand, want to wield such an empire as the Roman, and yet build up their polity upon the narrow plane of a Spartan ἀγωγή. In this there is an inherent contradiction. They hamper their best intentions, and must at all times, and against their better convictions, legislate for faddists, because they lack the courage of their Imperial mission.

"Empires want Imperial institutions, that is, such as are richly endowed in point of political power. Offices ought to be given by appointment, and not by competitive examinations, if only for five or ten years. The police ought to have a very much more comprehensive power, and the schools ought to be subject to a national committee. Parliament must be Imperial, and not only British. Very much more might be said about the necessity of rendering this Realm more *apotelestic*, as we have called it, but I see that Euripides is burning to make his remarks, and I am sure that he is able to give us the final

expression of the whole difficulty in a manner that none of us can rival."

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Thereupon Euripides addressed the company as follows:

"For many, many a year I have observed and studied the most life-endowed commonwealth that the world has ever seen, Athens. I watched the Athenians in their homes, in the market-place, in the law courts, in peace and war, in the theatre and in the temple, at the holy places of Eleusis and Delphi, their men as well as their women.

"Personally I long inclined towards a view of the world almost exclusively influenced by Apollo. I thought that as the sun is evidently the great life-giver of all existence, so light, reason, system, liberty, and consummately devised measures constitute the highest wisdom of the community.

"In all I wrote or said I worked for the great god of Light, and Reason, and Progress. I could not find words and phrases trenchant enough to express my disdain for sentiments and ideas discountenanced by Apollo. I persecuted and fiercely attacked all those dark, chthonic, and mysterious passions of which man is replete to overflowing. I hated Imperialism, I adored Liberty; I extolled Philosophy, and execrated Orphic ideas.

"But at last, when I had gone through the fearful experiences of the Peloponnesian War, with all its supreme glories and its unrelieved shames, I learned

to think otherwise. I learned to see that as man has two souls in his breast, one celestial or Apollinic, the other terrestrial or Dionysiac, so there are two gods, and not one, that govern this sub-lunar world.

"The two are Apollo and Dionysus.

"One rules the world of light, of political power, of scientific reason, and of harmonious muses. The other is the god of unreason, of passion, and wild enthusiasm, of that unwieldy Heart of ours which is fuller of monsters, and also of precious pearls, than is the wide ocean.

"Unless in a given commonwealth the legislator wisely provides for the cult of both gods, in an orderly and public fashion, Dionysus or Apollo will take fearful revenge for the neglect they suffer at the hands of short-sighted statesmen and impudent unbelievers.

"In the course of our Great War we have come into contact and conflict with many a non-Greek nation, or people whom we rightly term Barbarians. For while some of them sedulously, perhaps over-zealously, worship Dionysus, they all ignore or scorn Apollo. The consequence is that the great god blinds them to their own advantages, robs them of light and moderation, and they prosper enduringly neither as builders of States nor as private citizens in their towns.

"For Apollo, like all the gods, is a severe god, and his bow he uses as unerringly as his lyre.

"It is even so with Dionysus.

"The nation that affects to despise him, speedily falls a wretched victim to his awful revenge. Instead of worshipping him openly and in public fashion, such a nation falls into grotesque and absurd eccen-

tricities, that readily degenerate into poisonous vices, infesting every organ of the body politic and depriving social intercourse of all its charms. The Spartans, although they allowed their women a temporary cult of the god Dionysus, yet did not pay sufficient attention to him, worshipping mainly Apollo. They had, in consequence, to do much that tends to de-humanisation, and, while many admired them, no one loved them.

"It was this, my late and hard-won insight into the nature of man, which I wanted to articulate in the strongest fashion imaginable in my drama called the *Bacchæ*. I see with bitterness how little my commentators grasped the real mystery of my work. If Dionysus was to me only the symbol of wine and merrymaking, why should I have indulged in the gratuitous cruelty of punishing the neglect of Bacchus by the awful murder of a son-king at the hands of his own frenzied mother-queen? All my Hellenic sentiment of moderation shudders at such a ghastly exaggeration.

"Neither the myth nor my drama refers to wanton, barbarous bloodshed; and such scholars as assume archaic human sacrifices in honour of Dionysus, and 'survivals' thereof in Dionysiac rites, ought to be taken in hand by the god's own Mænads and suffer for their impudence.

"Human sacrifices indeed, but not such as are made by stabbing people with knives and bleeding them to physical death. Human sacrifices in the sense of a terrible loss of human capital, of a de-humanisation caused by the browbeating of the Heart—this and nothing else was the meaning of my drama.

"And what country is a fuller commentary on the truth of my *Bacchæ* than England?

"Here is a country that, had Dionysus been properly worshipped by its people, might be the happiest, brightest of all nations, a model for all others, and living like the gods in perpetual bliss—that is, in perfect equilibrium of thought and action, reason and sentiment, beauty and moderation. They have done much and successfully for Pythian Apollo; they have established a solid fabric of Liberty and Imperial Power; various intellectual pursuits they have cultivated with glory; and in their pæans to Apollo they have shown exquisite beauties of expression and feeling.

"But Dionysus they persistently want to neglect, to discredit, to oust.

"Instead of bowing humbly and openly to the god of enthusiasm, of unreasoned lilt of sentiment and passion, and of the intense delight in all that lives and throbs and vibrates with pleasure and joy; they affect to suppress sentiments, to rein in all pleasures, and to cast a slur on joy.

"And then the god, seeing the scorn with which they treat him, avenges himself, and blinds and maddens them, as he did King Pentheus of Thebes, King Perseus of Argos, the daughters of Minyas of Orchomenos, Proitos of Tiryns, and so many others. The god Dionysus puts into their hearts absurd thoughts and fantastic prejudices, and some of them spend millions of money a year to stop the use of the Bacchic gifts in a country which has long been the least drinking country in the white world, and as a matter of fact drinks far too little good and noble wine.

"Others again are made by angry Dionysus to μαίνεσθαι or rage by adding to the 250 unofficial yearly fogs of the country, fifty-two official ones, which they call Sundays.

"Again others, instigated by the enraged god Dionysus, drive people to furor by their intolerable declamations against alleged cruelties to animals, while they are themselves full of cruel boredom to human beings.

"There is, I note with satisfaction, one among them who seems to have an inkling of the anger of the god, and who has tried to restore, in a fashion, the cult of Dionysiac festivals.

"He calls his Orphic Association the Salvation Army.

"They imitate not quite unsuccessfully the doings of the legs and feet of the true worshippers of Dionysus; but the spirit of the true cult is very far off from them.

"And so Dionysus, ignored and looked down upon by the people of this country, avenges himself in a manner the upshot and sum of which is not inadequately represented in my *Bacchæ*.

"And yet the example of the Hellas of Hellas, or of the town of Athens, which all of them study in their schools, might have taught them better things.

"When, by about the eighth or seventh century B.C. (as they say), the cult of Dionysus began to spread in Greece, the various States opposed it at first with all their power. All these States were Apollinic contrivances. They were ordered by reasoned constitutions, generally by one man. In them everything was deliberately arranged for light, order, good rhythm, clearness, and system. It was all in honour

of Apollo, the city-builder. Naturally the leaders of those States hated Dionysus.

"However, they were soon convinced of the might of the new god, and, instead of scorning, defying or neglecting him, the wise men at the head of affairs resolved to adopt him officially. In this they followed (O Trichas, did they not?) the example of Delphi, which, although formerly purely Apollinic, now readily opened its holy halls to the new god Dionysus, so that ever after Delphi was as much Dionysiac as it was Apollinic.

"At Athens they honoured the new god so deeply and fully that, not content with the ordinary rural sports and processions given in his honour, the Athenians created the great Tragedy and Comedy as a fit cult of the mighty god. The Athenians were paid to go to those wondrous plays, where their Dionysiac soul could and did find ample food, and was thereby purged and purified, or, in other words, prevented from falling into the snares of silly faddists of religious or other impostures. But for those Dionysiac festivals in addition to the cult of Apollo, the Greeks would have become the Chinese of Europe.

"Why, then, do not the English do likewise? Why do they not build a mighty, State-kept theatre, or several of them? Why does their State try to pension decrepit persons, and not rather help to balance young minds? Why have they no public *agones* or competitions in singing, reciting, and dancing? They do officially, next to nothing for music; and if one of their *strategi* or ministers was known to be a good pianist or violinist, as they call their instruments, they would scorn him as unworthy

of his post. Yet few of such *strategi* are the equals of Epaminondas, who excelled both in dancing and playing our harp.

"But while they ignore music—that is, Dionysus' chief gift—they crouch before the unharmonious clamour of any wretched Orphic teetotaller, vegetarian, or Sabbatarian.

"This is how Dionysus avenges himself.

"I see how uneasy they are with regard to the great might of the Germans. Why, then, do they not learn to respect Dionysus, who was the chief help to the powerful consolidation of the German Empire? German music kept North and South Germans intimately together; it saved them from wasting untold sums of money, of time, of force, on arid fads; it paved the way to political intimacy.

"Had the English not neglected Dionysus, had they sung in his honour those soul-attaching songs which once learned in youth can never be forgotten, they might have retained the millions of Irishmen, who have left their shores, by the heart-melting charm of a common music. From the lack of such a delicate but enduring tie, the Irish had to be held by sterile political measures only.

"In music there is infinitely more than a mere tinkling of rhythm; there is Dionysus in it. Their teachers of politics sneer at Aristotle because he treats solemnly of music in his 'Politics.' But Aristotle told me himself that he sneers at them, seeing what absurd socialistic schemes they discuss because they do not want to steady the souls of their people by a proper cult of Dionysus.

"Socialism is doomed to the fate of Pentheus at the terrible hands of Dionysus. Socialism despises

Dionysus; the god will speedily drive it to madness.

"See, friends, we must leave—yonder Apollo is rising; he wants to join Dionysus, who passed us a little while ago. Should both stay in this country, and should they both be properly worshipped, we might from time to time come back again. At present I propose to leave forthwith for the Castalian springs."

THE SEVENTH NIGHT

SOCRATES, DIOGENES, AND PLATO ON RELIGION

DURING the seventh night the gods and heroes met again at Rome in the Coliseum. The splendid moon hung deep from the sky like a huge lantern, and shed her mild and plaintive rays over all the immense building. The immortals, in their light dresses and lighter movements, formed a gorgeous contrast to the sombre stones of the vast edifice. When all had taken their seats, Zeus rose in all his majesty and spake:

"Gods and heroes! We have derived much exquisite distraction from the stories of Alcibiades, Diogenes, Plato, Aristotle, Columbus and Cæsar about the various features of lay-life in England. If now I call upon you, Socrates, to tell us something about the religious life of the English, it is, I need hardly assure you, not in a spirit of mockery that I do so. What we here think about it all, we know, and need not utter it. When Athena in her indignation more than once asked me to hurl my lightning into her former abode at Athens, into the remains of the Parthenon, I told her something in secret—she knows what,—and did not touch the holy temple. Even so shall I deal with the temples of the little ones. We shall listen to you, Socrates, with sympathy and attention."

Up rose the sturdy figure of the sage. His

features had become even more illuminated with humanity, and thus more divine, and over his face erred a mild smile. He spoke as follows:

"O Zeus and the other gods and heroes! In my mortal time I frequently listened to the marvellous stories of Herodotus, and while I never permitted myself to question his honesty, as later on Plutarch did, yet I could not help doubting some of his tales about the religions of the various peoples he describes. Had I then known and learnt what I have learnt since in England, I should not have felt the slightest doubt regarding his statements.

"I had been in England for some time before I began to understand something of their curious religions. For, they have not one religion, but quite a number of such. At first I thought they had different religions according to the boundaries of their different counties. I fancied that such a neat geographical distribution might render the whole matter more methodic. But I found that that was not the case. In the same way I tried to find out whether their religions were not distributed according to their sixty different social classes. This too did not work. I then tried their professions; after that, their dress; after that, their income-tax; then, their private games.

"In that way I finally came to reach the true lines of cleavage between their numerous religions. For, to put it briefly, their religions are parallel to and dependent on each man's hobbies.

"If, for instance, an Englishman dislikes wine, and thus leans towards Puritanic ideas, he will be much inclined to adopt the religion of one Calvin, who taught to enjoy life by killing all its joys.

"Another Englishman, being very partial to tobacco and to smoking, will have a natural bent towards the High Church, in which much incense is burnt and much smoke produced.

"Another, being very methodical and punctilious, will regard Methodism with much sympathy.

"A fourth, being afflicted with great susceptibility to moral shocks, goes among the Quakers.

"In that way I began to feel my way through the maze of their religions. The strangest thing, however, was that all these multifarious believers staunchly maintained that they took their divergent creeds from one and the same book: from the Bible. In that respect they reminded me of my whilom adversaries at Athens, the Sophists, who could prove the pro and con of any given assertion with equal volubility.

"In order to imbue myself fully with the spirit of their beliefs, I frequently went to church on Sundays.

"To be quite frank, I do not very well see why in England they call that day a Sunday. There is no sun in it, and otherwise it resembles night more than anything else. It ought to be called Un-day. I concluded that everything arranged for that day was done in order to bring out its resemblance to night ever so strongly. Thus, lest people should forego sleep on that drowsy day, the people of England have introduced thousands of soporifics in the shape of sermons. What other use that drug may have I could never see.

"To me as an old Hellene it seemed a thing quite beyond comprehension, why people should go out of their way to salary a person for making them feel

creepy at the same place, and on the same day of the week, by repeating the same admonitions in nearly the same words hundreds of times a year. Evidently their lives on the other days of the week are so spiritless, dull and dry, that they want to get at least on Sundays some moral hair-friction with spiritual *eau de Cologne*. We Hellenes never thought of doing such things. It would have struck us as a personal insult to suppose that we needed such perpetual moralisation at stated times.

"Hippocrates told me that some constitutions do need the constant use of purgative waters. But do all people suffer from ethical constipation?

"I could not help smiling at the idea of my preaching like that to the Athenians of my time. They would have handed me the goblet with hemlock long before they did do it. Each householder would have considered my pretensions to moralise them as a slander on his private life. Each of them tried to make his own house a chapel full of constantly practised piety, dutifulness, and humanity. What need had he of my sermons? When he joined the great festivals of the city, it was to do his duty by the other Athenians, just as he joined the army on land, or the navy on sea, for the same purpose.

"We knew of no dogmas. We did not think that a man need stake all his soul on the belief in certain abstract dogmas. If he did not feel inclined to linger on one story told of Zeus, he might lovingly dwell on any other of the numberless stories told of him. If some said that Zeus was born in Crete, others maintained that he was born elsewhere. It seemed to us immaterial whether this fact or that was or was not historically exact.

"Not so the little ones. For them religion is viewed as a matter of documentary evidence, like a bill of sale. They constantly clamour for 'evidence,' 'proofs' and 'verifications.' Their theologians are solicitors and barristers, but not religious men. If I had asked Pericles for 'evidences' of the religious cult practised by his family or *gens*, the Alcmæonidæ, he would have indignantly told his slaves to put me out of the house, just as if I had asked him to give me 'evidences' of his wife's virtue.

"We held that Religion is not a matter of 'evidences,' any more than Life, Health, Sleep, or Dreams stand in need of being 'proved' by 'evidences.' We know that we live, or that we are in good health; we do not care to listen to long-winded arguments proving it.

"On my rambles in England I met many a clergyman. I remember one who occupied a high position at Canterbury, and was a very learned man. I was rather curious to learn what he thought of the religion of the Greeks. He treated me to the following remarks:

"'The Religion of the Greeks? Why, my dear sir, they had none. The Greeks were pagans, heathens. They believed in all sorts of immoral stories about immoral gods and goddesses; they were sunk in wholesale corruption and rottenness. Their vices smelt to heaven. Did ever any Greek say that he who smiteth you on your left cheek, ought to be offered your right cheek too?'

"'No,' I said, continued Socrates, 'we never said that, because we knew that nobody would ever do it. We did so many noble actions at home and in war that we never felt the urgency of

exaggerating actions in words, that we never did in fact.'

"'Is that it?' he answered. 'Do you mean to say that we only say such things, because we never practise them?'

"'Precisely,' said I. '"Incapable of the deed, you try to embrace its shadow, the word," as Democritus said.'

"'Even if we never practised them, is it not sublime to say them? Is it not increasing our moral worth when we profess to be gentle and generous and superhumanly good, not exactly on the day when we make such professions, but possibly on some subsequent day?'

"'I am afraid,' said I, 'this we used to call the talk of sycophants and hypocrites.'

"'But for my Religion, sir, I should reply in very offensive terms. We are no hypocrites. We believe what we say, and all that is required is to believe. We do not trouble about the application of our beliefs, any more than the mathematician troubles about the practical application of his theorems.'

"'This is my very objection to your belief. Religion is not a theorem but an action, an active sentiment. Our religion was like our language: all active verbs, all movement and energy, all expression and sentiment, but no theorems.'

"'But just look at the superstition and downright fiction in all your mythology! Who has ever seen Apollo, Dionysus, the Graces, Aphrodite, or any other of your numberless gods? They are all mere phantasies, meant to amuse, but not to elevate. They belong to the infancy of the religious sentiment, and are only a more artistic form of Fetishism.'

"'I quite believe you,' I said, 'that you never met the Graces, nor Aphrodite. Perhaps they avoided you as carefully as you did them.'

"'Sir, this is frivolous. In our Religion there is nothing frivolous. Allow me to be quite frank with you. It is stated that you confessed to having felt the touch of some Phryne's beautiful hand on your shoulder for several days. Sir, this characterises you, and all the heathen Greeks. My mind staggers at the idea that one of our bishops should ever confess to such a frivolous sentiment. We too have shoulders; and there are still alas! Phrynes amongst us. But none of our class would ever confess to having felt what you admitted to have felt. There you have precisely the difference between you and us.'

"'You are ashamed of your humanity, and we were not; this is the whole difference. We were so full of our humanity, that we humanised even our gods. You are so ashamed of your humanity, that you dehumanise and supra-humanise your god.'

"'Disgraceful, sir, most disgraceful. Our humanity is *in* God!'

"'And only in Him; so that none is left in you.'

"At these words," continued Socrates, "the man left me.

"A few days later I was at a place which they call Oxford, and where dwell and teach many of their Sophists. A young man is there taught to assume that callous look which is very imposing to Hindoos and negroes. Nothing surprises him, as nothing stirs him, except the latest shape of a cuff or a collar. He becomes in due time a curious blend of a monk, a fop, and a pedant.

"I was led to one of the most renowned of their theologians, whose name in our language means a coachman. He received me with a curious smile. Before I could say anything he spoke as follows:

"'I understand, sir, that you pose as the late Socrates. Well, well—come, come! I must tell you in confidence that I, being a higher critic, am a perfect adept in the great science of the vanishing trick. Suppose you bring forward a famous personage of history, and want him to disappear. Nothing is easier to me. I ask the man first of all very simple questions, such as:

"'Who asked him to exist?

"'Why did he choose his mother in preference to many other able women?

"'What made him prefer his father to so many other capable men?

"'For what reason did he fix his particular place of birth, let alone the time of the year, month, week and day where and when he was born?

"'What motive had he in filling the air with his screamings soon after his birth?

"'Could he give any satisfactory explanation of his various illnesses as a child? That is, whether he had measles and whooping-cough out of malice prepense, out of cussedness, or out of any hopes of receiving more attention?

"'When the man cannot satisfactorily answer these clear and positive questions, I put him down first as a suspect. Then I proceed to further questions.

"'If he is said to have won a battle, I ask him why he fought it on land and not on sea? Or *vice versâ*.

"'Why he did not, while fighting the battle,

accurately determine the degrees of longitude and latitude of the locality of the battle?

"'Or why his chief general's name began with an L and not with an S?

"'If he is said to have been an ancient legislator, I ask him why he took his laws from his neighbours?

"'What mode of registration and publication of the law he observed?

"'Whether the paper of his code was hand-made, or wood-pulp?

"'Whether the water-marks on it were original or were imitations?

"'Whether he used ink or paint?

"'Whether he wrote them standing or sitting?

"'Whether he used the same pen for writing his nouns and verbs? Or whether he had different pens for the different parts of speech?

"'Whether he really knew what a noun was? Whether he liked male terminations, or preferred to revel in female endings? Whether he was not prejudiced against pronouns, or felt an idiosyncracy against the letters b, k, and z?

"'If the man cannot satisfactorily answer all these pertinent questions, I declare him to be a fraud. I tell him straight into his face that he never existed, and then I revile him as a low character for pretending an existence that is totally unfounded. Now, as to your case. You say, you are Socrates. Can you answer any of the questions I enumerated? Let us take the first question: "Who asked you to exist?"'

"'Athens, I presume,' said Socrates.

"'Athens? To dispose of this answer, we must

first of all see whether Athens existed. I put it to you, sir, can you prove that Athens existed?'

"'I can; for, it still exists.'

"'Note the glaring fallacy! A thing that now exists, now, that is, on the brink of the present and the future, can that be said to have *eo ipso* existed in the past? I put it to you most seriously, is the brink of the present, the past? Is the brink of the future, the past? Can, then, the brink of the present *and* the future be called the past? Athens may have existed. That is, a number of houses and streets, once called Athens, may have existed. But can you say, I put it to you most mostly, can you say that the houses of Athens asked you to exist? Or did the streets do so?'

"'By Athens we mean the Athenians.'

"'Oh, I see, the Athenians. Who were they? Two-thirds were foreign slaves; one-fifth were *metiks*, that is, denizens of foreign extraction. Consequently, two-thirds and one-fifth being thirteen-fifteenths, the overwhelming majority of the town being *uitlanders*, you cannot possibly be said to have been asked into existence by them. Remain two-fifteenths of Athenians proper. Of these the great majority were your enemies, who drove you into death. Can they, who furiously clamoured for your death, be said to have violently wished for your birth?

"'Remain, therefore, only a handful of Athenians who *may* have desired you to exist. How could they give due expression to their wish? In the Assembly matters were decided by a majority, which they did not control. In the law courts were hundreds, nay thousands of judges in each case, of

whom, as *per supra*, the great majority were your enemies, who would have decided against your birth. In the Temples such decisions were never taken.

"'The intention of your prenatal friends could thus remain but a mere private wish of a few citizens, but could not possibly be an inherent tendency or desire of Athens. *Quod erat demonstrandum.* And since you have been unable to give a satisfactory answer to the first of the crucial questions, I put you down as a suspect.'

"I did not say anything," said Socrates. "I was amazed beyond expression that such nonsense could be allowed to pose as searching and 'scientific' analysis of facts. But he triumphantly continued:

"'You say nothing? *Qui tacet consentire videtur*, —silence means consent. I can see in your face how overawed you are by my sagacity, I have unmasked you. We unmask everything and anything. We unmask stones, pyramids, crocodiles, ichneumons, princes, kings, prophets, and heroes. We strike terror into the common people by our vast erudition and our penetrating sagacity.

"'We are the Sherlock Holmes of theology.

"'We run down any pretender, any scribe, any man who has the impudence of posing as a somebody. Given that we are not much; how can he be anything?

"'If you will stay here for some time, you will soon know a lot about what did not happen in ancient Israel.

"'Oxford is the Scotland Yard of all those humbugs that pass by the name of Abraham, Moses, King David, Samson, the Prophets, and other impostors. We have pin-pricked them out of existence!

"'At present we have proved that all the Religion of Israel was stolen from Babylon. In a few years we shall prove that the Babylonians stole it all from the Elamites, farther east. This, once well established, will give us a welcome means of proving that the Elamites stole it all from the Thibetans; who stole it from the Chinese; who stole it from the Japanese; who stole it from the Redskins in America; who stole it from the Yankees; who stole it from Oxford. And so we shall return to this great University and provide occupation and fame for the higher critics of the next three hundred years. Where are you now, O Pseudo-Socrates?'

"I was unable to say a word for some time. When I collected myself to a certain extent, I said:

"'O Sophist, if our Religion in ancient Greece had had no other advantage than that of saving us from the works of "higher critics," it has deserved well of us. We were immune from that disease, at any rate. Dion of Prusa and others wrote declamations against the historicity of the Trojan War; but nobody took them for more than what they were, for rhetorical exercises. No Hellene would have paid the slightest attention, nor accorded the slightest recognition to men like yourself. The English must be suffering from very ugly religious crochets and spiritual eczemas, to have recourse to drugs and pills offered by such medicine-men.'

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"Other friends in England to whom I expressed my profound aversion to this puny scepticism in matters of Religion, advised me to attend the sermons given by a relatively young man with white hair in a temple in the city. They said that in him and his addresses there was religious sentiment. I accepted their advice and went repeatedly to hear what was called *The New Religion*.

"The young man talked well and impressively. He told them that two and two made four, and absolutely refused to make five.

"With much emphasis he declared that he could not believe in miracles, because of the miraculous way in which they happened. If, he said, a miracle should happen in an orderly fashion, performed under police revision, say, in Regent Street in front of Peter Robinson's, the arrangement and whole sequence of the procedure being duly anticipated and announced by the *Daily Nail* or the *Daily X-Rays*, then indeed he would say: 'O Lord, O Lord, I am convinced.'

"'But,' the white-haired young man said, 'how can you, the rest of the world, or anyone else suppose that I could believe a miracle, that pops in from mid-air, in the most disorderly and unreasonable fashion, without having given notice either to the police or to the editor of the *Daily Nail* or the *Daily X-Rays*?

"'Such a miracle is a mere vagrant, a loafer, a *déclassé* or *déraciné*, as we say in Burmese. It has neither documents to legitimate itself with, nor any decent social connections. It disturbs the professor of physics at that great seat of untaught knowledge, the London University; it annoys all chemists, and

confirms my colleagues in the other pulpits in their preposterous superstitions.

"'My brethren and *sithren*, I tell you there are no miracles; there never were any; there never can be any. Just let me tell you an interesting experience I had the other day with a man who travelled in the south of France, a country which, but for the fact that England is good enough to patronise her, would long since have disappeared from the surface of this or any other planet.

"'The gentleman in question spoke of Lourdes, and the miracles he had seen there. I listened for a while with patience; at last I could bear it no longer, and the following dialogue arose between us:

"He: '"Lourdes is the most convincing case of the miraculous power of the true Church."

"I: '"The true Church is in the city of London, sir, and there is no miracle going on there whatever."

"He: '"I completely differ, especially if, for argument's sake, I accept your statement that the temple in the city is the true Church. If that be so, then the miracles wrought there are even greater than those observable at Lourdes."

"I: '"I thank you for your rapid conversion. I am glad to see that you feel the power of my Church. This power comes from the great truths I teach. But as to miracles proper, I must, if reluctantly, decline the honour. I repeat it, there are no miracles in my Church, neither taught nor wrought."

"He: '"Come, come! Not only are there miracles in your Church, but they are also of the very same type that I noted at Lourdes."

"I: '"Sir, how can you insult me so gratuitously? Lourdes swarms with so-called miracles, which are no

miracles at all, but only the effects of auto-hypnotisation. A person who can believe in the healing power of St ——"

"He: '"Steady, steady, my dear sir. I do not allude to that healing power at all. Again, placing myself on your standpoint, I will, for argument's sake, admit that the waters at Lourdes have no miraculous healing power owing to the influence of this saint or that. You might permit me to remark, nevertheless, that it is just as much of a miracle as when the drugs prescribed by our doctors happen to cure us. For, what could be more miraculous than that? But this is only by the way. I allude to quite another miracle, and I can only express my amazement that you do not guess it more quickly."

"I: '"I am quite out of touch with miracles."

"He: '"Bravo! This is precisely what the great Lessing used to say: the greatest of all miracles is the one that people do not notice as such at all. Just consider: do you not draw vast masses of people to your sermons? Have you not persuaded most of them that you have founded a new Religion? What on earth could be more miraculous than that!

"'"In your sermons you dance on a thin rope of logic made out of the guts of a few anæmic cats dropped from the dissecting table of science. If therefore you had won a reputation as a rope-dancer, one could readily understand it. But you have won the reputation of a founder of a new religion, which is to a logical rope what catguts are to a great violinist. Is that not marvellous? Savonarola would have charged you, at best, with blacking his shoes, and yet people take you for a modern

Savonarola. Is that not marvellous? Is it anything short of a miracle? Is not this the very miracle of Lourdes? Hundreds of thousands of intelligent Frenchmen believe in the healing power of water in consequence of its canonisation by a saint. Is this not a miracle in our time?"

"I: '"If I am to be infinitely less worthy a man than Savonarola because I believe in the infinity and truth of Science, I gladly forego the honour. The more light we pour into the human heart, the nobler it will be."

"He: '"So you believe that your hearers follow you on account of the light you give them? Pray, abandon any such idea forthwith. They cling to you because of your interesting personality, and because you give satisfaction to their vanity. In persuading them that the life-blood of the 'old' Religion is mere stale water, they congratulate themselves on their being intellectually superior to the orthodox believers.

"'"Is there no one who has the courage to say aloud that the canker of all Religions in England is their constant toadying to Reason and Science? The theory of Evolution, first rightly condemned by the clergy, is now an established costume without which no bishop would dare to officiate in sermons or books. Naturalists all over the world lustily attack and combat Evolution; but no English clergyman ventures to doubt it. He will and must toady to what he thinks is 'Science.'

"'"Formerly Science was the *ancilla*, or maid of Theology; now Theology is the mere charwoman of any physiologist or biologist."

"I: '"And so it shall be. I see, my good man, I

must talk to you a little more plainly. We theologians want nothing but authority. We have long since learned that this world is governed by authority, and by nothing else; just as is the next world, if there be any. Now, in former times Science was not imposing enough. Being, as it was, in its infancy, it had little authority. So we trampled upon it, and side-tracked it with disdain. At present, on the other hand, Science has become quite an influential member of society. It goes on doing marvellous things and inventing incredible feats of physical, chemical, or biological triumph.

"'"What is more natural than that we now not only receive the *homo novus*, the man of Science, but that we also try to avail ourselves of the authority his exploits give him?

"'"Take this nation. It is thoroughly materialist and on its knees before Science. For the last sixty years Science, and nothing but physical Science has been knocked into its head. This nation thinks that any study outside Science proper is pleasant humbugging. They are completely ignorant of human history. Give us Science! Give us facts, facts! Of course they say so, because facts save them the trouble of thinking, and do not allow one to pose as a thinker.

"'"Facts, scientific facts, that is all that they want. Human thought, they think, is a physical excretion from the brain, just as tears are from the lachrymal glands, or other liquids from the kidneys. Hence, they infer, all that is needed is to study, in a physiological laboratory, the brain.

"'"What's the use of literary history, for instance? If you want to know it, you have only to study the

brain which is the cause of at least some portions of literature.

"'" What is the use of military history? Study, in a physiological laboratory, the arm, not arms; since it is the arm that fights.

"'" What is the use of Sociology, say, the study of the Family? Study, in a physiological laboratory, the nerves of certain organs which constitute the true cause of families. And similarly with all other studies relating to the humanities. Science; it is all a matter of Science proper."

"'Under these conditions,' the white-haired one continued, 'what can we do but take the requisite authority there where we find it best developed, in Science? Anything that pleases the *grand seigneur*, we hasten to acquiesce in while shoe-licking him. Science proper, that is, Physics, Chemistry, and Physiology disavow Imponderables, Tendencies, Present Projections of the Future, Incomprehensibles, etc., etc.; so do we.

"'Science cannot move from certain mathematical principles; speedily we too cry aloud that we cannot cease hugging these dear principles.

"'Science can never analyse or reconstrue the mystery of all mysteries: Personality; at once we novel theologians exclaim, beating our worn breasts, that Personality is no historic force at all.

"'Science cannot possibly so much as approach the problem of creativeness, creation, or origin of life; hence we gallop after it like newsboys, screaming at the top of our voices: "Latest news! No creation! No origins! Bill just passed! Enormous majority! One penny! Latest news!"

"'Cannot you see that? Can you not grasp that

as in Republican countries we are Republicans, and in Monarchical ones, Monarchists; even so in an age overawed by the surface-scratchers of physical Science, we too must feel the itch and scratch away with violence?

"'We cannot possibly afford to forego the authority at present in the gift of Science. How could I dare to treat Jesus as one of those mysterious persons that bring to a head both vast and secular tendencies of the Past, and Present Projections of an immense Future? He, I hear from a certain humanist, was the heir of all that marvellous Power of Personality, called Cephalism, which shaped all classical antiquity; and at the same time He was the Anticipative Projection of a vast Future.

"'Perhaps.

"'But could any process approved by Science proper be applied to such a mode of thinking? None. Consequently I am bound to belittle, to ignore it.

"'As long as Jesus is not amenable to that mode of biography or to that kind of reflections which we apply to the life of cockroaches or gnats, we cannot seriously speak of Him.

"'Or is not His preaching like the laying of eggs by a bird, out of which eggs new birds arise in due time?

"'Is not His Church like the nest of a spotted woodpecker made in the hollow of some ancient tree?

"'Are not His apostles like the watch-birds amongst wandering cranes?

"'If, then, we want to study Him scientifically, we must treat Him and His exactly as we treat a hoopoe or a jackdaw. Not that we really know anything about a hoopoe or a jackdaw. But in treating Him in that

fashion we can use all the sounding terms of Science, and thus, don't you see, secure all the authority of which Science to-day has so plentiful a share.

"'I have so far founded the New Religion. But I am not quite satisfied with it. I feel we need a Newest Religion. Ever since my birth the world has stepped into a new era. Something has been wrenched from its former place. I must at once see to it.

"'Meanwhile I am preparing a Life of Jesus on a truly scientific basis. The Lives hitherto published are completely out of date. They lack the true scientific spirit.

"'My "Life of Jesus" will have three sections. The first will contain the Antecedents. I will start with the soil, the air, and the waters of Palestine. I will investigate the influence which the geology of Palestine had on Jesus; especially, whether the stratification of that soil does not correspond to the stratification of the mind of Jesus. In that way I will obtain the precise nomenclature of the various layers of the intellect, human and Messianic, of Jesus.

"'Thus, I will determine his palæolithic, neolithic, pliocene, miocene and other tertiary mental formations. That will be inestimable.

"'I will then proceed to a close analysis of the air in Palestine, and try to determine how much argon it contains. This, together with the jargon talked round Bethlehem, and a close study of the remains of the King Sargon will give me a solid foundation for my researches into the feelings of Jesus. I will thus make sure whether these feelings were subconscious, auto-hypnotic, auto-Röntgenising, æroplanesque, or zeppelinury.

"'Should I find some radium in the stones near

Bethlehem or Nazareth, I shall be enabled to account for the precociousness and light-emitting gift of Jesus.

"'Once I have thus settled the Antecedents, I will proceed to His life. In accordance with the method of zoologists and biologists, to whom one fox is as good as another, and one rabbit as serviceable as another, I will study the daily life of a modern rabbi in Sichem, or Jerusalem.

"'I will measure his nose, his lips, the width and height of his mouth when yawning and when asleep, his weight, his rapidity of walk, the loudness of his voice, his pulse, his heart, his meals, and his drinks. This will give me valuable data for the life of Jesus. I will reduce all these data to finely-drawn statistical tables.

"'As soon as I shall be in possession of these tables I will attack the most important part of my work: I will not tire until I discover the microbe which imparted to all that Jesus said an extraordinary power of captivation. That microbe, I have no doubt, can be distilled from a comparative solution of Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Mahomet and Jesus. I name it *microbus prophetizans Huxleyi*. I shall, I trust, isolate it and send specimens to the South Kensington Museum, I will——'

* * * * *

"When the white-haired one," said Socrates, "had arrived at that stage of his wanderings, I left the hall. I felt sea-sick. These little ones think that they can triangulate the human personality, because they

have triangulated many of their countries. They never consider that triangulation, and all scientific methods, refer, and can refer only to quantity or material quality. There is no geometry of love, hatred, or spiritual power. It is the old error of the Pythagoreans which you, O Pythagoras, admitted to me after having whiled in Olympus for a few hundred years.

"Numbers are not the souls of things.

"Personality is the soul of things.

"We humans are pre-eminently creative. Our chief force is not intellect nor will-power. We are neither Hegelians nor Schopenhauerians. In point of sagacity many an animal transcends us; and did you not avow to me, O Leibniz, that the difference between you and a yokel is not so much in your being more intellectual, or in your having more brain-power, but in your having more creative power?

"Intellect, or the force of close thinking, may be found in abundance in the city of London. Had people devoted as keen an interest to science or philosophy as city men do to money transactions, we should be much further than we are.

"But people differ very much less in power of intellect than in strength of originality.

"The great men of Literature or Science or Art are not very much cleverer in point of intellect than is the rest of the people. They exceed them in point of originality; that is, they exceed them because they devote themselves to digging in unbroken ground. It is in this way they create.

"It is in this sense that each human is, to a certain extent, new ground; and consequently, that the Great Humans are absolutely new phenomena. In

other words, they are new creations. They have an X in them that no x-rays can penetrate into.

"Science can comprehend averages only. *Nova* she cannot approach. This is why Great Humans have invariably been disavowed, rejected, and pooh-poohed by men of Science.

"Why has a lily of the valley bell-like blossoms? Science will never explain it. Those bells are part of the personality of the lily; and Science can understand it as little as a crofter could understand a refined Athenian.

"You may imagine, O gods and heroes, what I felt when I heard so many clergymen talk so 'scientifically' of The Greatest of Humans, who by His being so was *eo ipso* Supra-human too.

"Science is unable to account for a lily of the valley; and yet shall Science be able to reconstruct Jesus?

I should have shrunk from the task of reconstructing, in the manner of men of Science, my Phrygian slave.

"One can re-recreate, as it were, many of the phenomena of Personality, but not by the methods of Science. Personalities belong to the Humanities, whose methods are totally different from those of Science proper.

"It was said of me that in my mortal time I brought Philosophy from Heaven to Earth. I wish, O Zeus, you would allow me to mix again with the people in order to raise their Philosophy from Earth to Heaven."

* * * * *

When Socrates had finished, a deep silence fell over the Assembly. In the divine face of Zeus there was no movement to be noticed, and not an encouraging word fell from his lips. Suddenly one heard a loud laughter. Everybody turned towards the place where the laughter came from, and felt relieved to see that Diogenes was preparing to address the Assembly. Zeus nodded consent, and the whilom Cynic spake as follows:

"Few things have afforded me greater pleasure than your tale, O Socrates. Verily I believe that your renewed presence among the little ones is much less needed than is mine. I am the only man that could set right the wrenched religious fibres of these mannikins and womenfolk. But for my respect for you and the Assembly, I should have burst into an unseemly laughter while you were talking of their New Religion, which is but a resurrection-pie less the resurrection.

"To talk to them seriously about the incapacity of any physical Science or its methods to cope with the problems of Religion is to waste precious time. Let them have their Evolution, Convolution, or Devolution, by all means. The more they welter in it, the more my pupils on earth have a welcome chance of success. The official clergy think wonders of their cleverness in trying to make Religion into a Centaur, half man, half horse, or half Science and half Belief. While they are at it, my pupils, infinitely cleverer than all the clergy, make glorious headway in all directions.

"Is it not side-splitting to note how these clergymen are unable to see that the more people learn of Science proper; the more they accustom their

minds to the dry biscuits of scientific methods; the more they will inwardly long for the drinks of Mysticism?

"The Roman clergy, trained by two thousand years, knows all that but too well.

"Your plain soul, your hard-working, scientifically untutored peasant or small *bourgeois* is quite satisfied with a little, hearty Belief, and is indifferent to Mysticism and religious Extravagancies. It is your high-strung, modern, scientifically trained mind that impatiently craves more than sober Science can give it.

"Just look at the Europoids in the western continent. In the United States everything is reasoned out, systematised, methodised to a nicety. Their whole life looks like their towns: regular squares; straight streets, named after the consecutive numbers; labelled, docketed, built and shaped according to definite rules. In an American town nothing surprises one, except that the people themselves do not have each his respective number painted on his back.

"As the streets, so are the Constitution, the Schools, the Territory,—everything is ruled like a sheet of music. In the 250,000 schools, in the 500,000 Universities, and the 600,000 libraries, all founded (or confounded?) by a few multis, you hear nothing but Reason, Reason, Reason. You get Reason boiled, roasted, fried or stewed. You get it from injectors, from which it will jet out in smaller or larger jets, so that if it be too much for you, one can, by pulling the piston backwards, again store it up in the injector.

"Instead of traditions, unarticulated tendencies,

latent *sous-entendus*, and delicate imponderables, there are only machines, ledgers, and registers, articulated with a vengeance, cryingly explicit and loud and indelicate. Everything is bound in the leather of reasonableness, in the hide of method, and in the wooden boards of Logic. Instead of on the rich soup of sentiments, men and women in the States are fed on scientific tabloids containing sentiments reduced to their ultimate chemical essences. A woman laughs at romance; her relations to men are 'reasonable.' A child laughs at piety; his or her relations to parents are tanned by 'sense'! A servant sneers at loyalty; her relations to the masters are macerated in the vinegar of 'inalienable right of reason.'

"All this is excellent—for me. For, what happens?

"The Americans indulging in too many orgies of Reasonableness; the Americans having thrown overboard all motives of historic truth in order to live under the banner of reasoned truth only, have long since become sick of Reason. They resemble a crew on a big ship that has stored its pantries and larders with nothing else than meat-extracts and tabloids. That crew, after a month's journey or so, will unfailingly sink or else eat the most loathsome fish rather than continue feeding on its scientific food.

"After all, when all is said and done, the Americans too are humans. They too want more than tabloids and meat-extracts. Tons of tins will not replace one fresh cabbage. On this eternal truth my disciples go to work in the States.

"Fully aware, as they are, that the Americans must be and are deadly 'tired' of Reason, they

hasten to give the people of the States the most exciting devices of Unreason. One of them invents Mormonism; the other, Spiritualism; the third, Zionism; the fourth, Oneidaism, or general Promiscuity; the fifth, Christian Science; the sixth, Incarnationism; and so forth, and so on, *ad infinitum.*

"Can my triumph be greater? I will carefully avoid telling them that by worshipping Apollo extravagantly while neglecting the great god Dionysus, they have fallen wretched victims to the wrath of the latter. Just let them go on writing contemptuous reflections on Greek Mythology, and glory in the 'wonderful century' in which Dionysus is declared to be a mere myth. As long as they do that, I shall not lack plenty of successful disciples, and my name will wax greater and greater, until nobody shall be able to find, even did he use the latest Edison lamp, a single well-balanced human in all the States.

"Why, then, take so many English clergymen and their evolutions round Evolution so gravely, O Socrates? They do what the Americans do: they overdo Reason. Do let them do it, and do not disturb my circles, as Archimedes said. I promise you, when next they introduce the 'latest' evolution, I will invite you to the sight, and you will enjoy the fun as you have rarely enjoyed anything. I have instructed a new set of pupils of mine to start *The* new Religion in England. The 'New Religion' of a year or so ago is out of fashion. What these decadent vibrants want is another Religion. I have just received a Marconigram from below, and am in a position to tell you all about the latest capers of my pupils. May I do so?"

Diana and Aphrodite and Pallas Athena at once

applauded, and their silvery laughter was joined by the rest of the gods and heroes. Dionysus sent two beautiful nymphs to make the resting-place of Diogenes more comfortable, and to offer him a cup of the wine of Capri, shining like gold and full of mirth. Diogenes, deeply bowing to the Great God, and to Zeus, then proceeded:

"I learn that *The* Religion now to be started is based on what my dear disciples have agreed to call *Elysiograms*; a word formed *à la* 'telegram,' 'marconigram,' and meant to denote messages from Elysium.

"It is quite evident that a generation of impatient eels such as the present instalment of the little ones, cannot possibly wait until after death for news from the other world. The sub-lunar world they have ransacked and swallowed, hair and flesh, and all. Before, in the morning, they have quite recovered from their sleep; and before they have quite finished their nerve-destroying first cup of Ceylon cabbage, they have, in their 'papers,' learnt all that has been going on in every quarter of the globe terrestrial.

"That globe begins to bore them. They must have a daily (or hourly?) column or two about what is going on in Elysium, let alone in Hades. It is indispensable for their digestion.

"Just fancy how very much more easily one could swallow one's lunch with just a little dose of Hades in it! While one tries to make a tunnel through the stony meat from Patagonia called Scotch beef, one would read with grim satisfaction how one's late creditor is maltreated in the torture-chamber of Hades. Why, one would feel so buoyant that one would even be able to finish a meal at the Cecil.

"You said, O Socrates, that their clergy adopt Evolution because of the authority it gives them. Surely, they can tarry no longer in adopting the improved means of communication. If Marconi can wire wirelessly to New York, how can the clergy stay lagging behind? They must needs go one better, and wire wirelessly to Elysium. Nothing can be plainer.

"People want it.

"Soon Messrs Wright will ascend the Rainbow and sit astride on it. Even before that, Herr Zeppelin will land the first German street-band on Mars; and, probably, ere that is done, Madame Curie will by means of a rock of Radium as big as St Paul's illumine and read all the vast depths of the unexplored Heavens.

"How, under these circumstances, can the clergy remain behind? It is unthinkable. Accordingly, it is understood that the *Daily Nail* and the *Crony* will have every day a column called *Elysiograms*. It will consist of single words, numbers, signs, exclamations, and pauses, *elysiogrammed* from over there. Some paragraphs will consist of commas, colons, semicolons, and dots only. They will be the most interesting. These messages will be carefully distinguished from massages. They will be quite different. They will give the most astounding news. My principal pupil, Professor Oliver Nodge, just marconied me the latest *Elysiogram*, which he was fortunate enough to receive to-day:

"'Rather hot day to-night.—Feel depressed as if I had exchanged ideas with Mr H. C.—4, o,—: !—Place here somewhat out of date.—Do send me

Times more regularly.—Can now see that flannels do not conduce to health.—Never forget to wind up your watch!—Death is a mere incident in Life.—If you can avoid it, don't die!—It is a failure.—34, 56, 78, 90, 12. . . .'"

When Diogenes had finished reading the *Elysiogram* of his pupil, even Hephæstus (Vulcan), otherwise so grave, broke out in a tremendous laughter which made one of the tiers of the Coliseum shake like an elm-tree in a gale.

"I am delighted to see," continued Diogenes, "that my pupils contribute to your amusement. It is indeed beyond a doubt that without them this world would be considerably staler and duller than it is. You may imagine that my pupils will not rest contented with a daily column in a newspaper.

"They will found Elysiogram papers of their own; found Elysiogram Churches; build up Elysiogram congregations; deliver Elysiogram sermons; in short, they will establish *The New Religion* of—*Elysionism.*

"In this marvellous Religion the believer is given all the shivers, cardiac vibrations, nervous shocks and prostrate contritions, pleasantly alternated with ecstatic exuberance, that he may wish for.

"In that respect it is far superior to any music hall.

"These funny clergymen rage against the music halls. But why have they abolished all public, gay, and variegated Church festivals, such as the Middle Ages had introduced in plenty? The public do want to have their shocks and shivers. If the Church does not provide some of them, music halls will.

"We Hellenes did everything to render Religion attractive and enjoyable. Our religious processions and public festivals were gorgeous with colours, fun, art, music, and touching piety.

"How could any Hellene have felt the need of a modern music hall, this the last degradation of the human intellect, worse than the Roman gladiatorial games, worse than the Spanish bull-fights, worse than the worst of French novels.

"If, therefore, the clergy will take our New Religion into the least consideration, they will forthwith see the immense advantages thereof. In *Elysionism* the most languorously delicate of the elegant ladies will at last find what she has all this time been hankering for.

"In the morning when she gets up between twelve and two o'clock, she will with religious shivers reach after the Elysiogram press. With burning eye she will run over the columns in search of the latest *Elysiogram*. Just think of her excitement on finding, in one paragraph or another, some indiscretion of one of her departed friends, male or female, regarding her. Just imagine how she will devoutly run to the editor of the paper, or to the *Elysiop*, that is, the chief bishop of the New Religion, offering him £100, £200, nay £500 for the 'tranquillity' of the poor soul in Elysium from whom came that disquieting par. The *Elysiop* will promise to do his best and will—enter the £500 *pour les frais de l'église*. What a delightfully exciting experience to have!

"Later on in the day, the same lady will enjoy the anxiety of a lady friend of hers who is waiting for an *Elysiogram* from her husband who disappeared

a few months before without sending his faithful wife the correct official statement of his departure. What exquisite moments of nervous expectation to pass!

"For a few further bank-notes *pour les frais de l'église*, the liberating *Elysiogram* appears.

"Imagine the interest with which sermons delivered by the Elysiop, Elysiarch, or the Elyseacon, will be attended by the *beau monde*. The preacher after the customary introduction will pull from his pocket the latest *Elysiograms*, which are notoriously frequent on Saturdays. Artistically pausing before he begins reading them out, he will fill all these vibrants with the most dainty nervous wrenchings and twistings.

"Then slowly he will report to them the latest news from Elysium and Hades. With that justice so characteristic of the Powers of the Other World, the pleasant news, full of consolation and comfort, is addressed to such members as have proved zealous in deed and alms to the Church. On the other hand, members whose zeal left much to be desired, are treated to news that makes both kinds of their hair stand on end.

"Where is the music hall or even the theatre that will be in a position to vie with such a Church in intense attractiveness? Once the classes as well as the masses are drawn to it, some Oxford or Liverpool professor will speedily come forward with the new dogmatics of *Elysionism*; and in less than three years Prof. Harnack of Berlin will write its history of dogmatics, and publish maps about its geographical distribution.

"Amongst the innumerable blessings of this

Religion there is one the value of which cannot be exaggerated, let alone properly estimated. I mean, of course, its vast resources for healing all diseases. It is patent that once we stand in continuous and direct communication with Elysium, we can easily inquire from our departed ones what we ought to do in case of illness. Since a given individual in Elysium who died of, say, hay-fever has traversed all its stages, and is naturally more conversant with it than any terrestrial doctor can ever be, knowing thereof not only the stages passing on earth but also those going on beyond the Rainbow; he is in the best of positions to advise a patient what to do and what not to do. Especially, when one takes into consideration that according to the most authentic *Elysiograms*, written by Prof. Nodge's own Elysiotyper, all departed people agree that hay-fever, appendicitis, pneumonia, etc., are only the *noms de plume* of Dr Smith, Dr Jones, Dr Jenkinson, and so on.

"We shall, accordingly, in any case of illness, simply communicate the symptoms to Elysium and ask for detailed instructions from such of the Elysians as have died of that disease. In that way we are sure to heal all diseases much more rapidly than even Christian Science or Mahometan Chemistry could do.

"We shall sell Elysio-pills, with which no Beecham's Pill will be able to compete; and using the indications we shall receive from over the Acheron, we shall have *dépôts* of Elysian Waters triumphing over Hunyady János, Carlsbad Sprudel, Contrexéville, or Aix-les-Bains.

"In fact, since the Kaiser is well known to be in close relations to the Upper World, and an intimate

friend of Providence, we shall arrange through him an Elysian Bath, somewhere near Nauheim.

"Then our Religion will be complete.

"It will have its unique Press, its hierarchy, its liturgy, sermons, pills, waters, and watering-places, let alone its Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, moral gymnasiums, self-denial weeks, and special wireless costumes.

"The extant religions will all disappear; religious unity will reign over the whole world, and if you, O Zeus, will consent to it, I shall personally preside at my headquarters in Westbourne Park Chapel."

The speech of Diogenes was received with hearty applause, and even stern Demosthenes congratulated him on his idea of offering a really new shake-up to the tired nerves of the poor human tremolos of Mayfair and the East End.

Several of the gods volunteered to send messages for the *Elysian Times*, and Cæsar proposed that he and Alexander the Great, Pericles, and other heroes send messages counterdicting the extant Greek and Roman histories of their exploits, in order to enjoy the huge fun arising from the confusion amongst scholars.

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When the hilarity of the Assembly had reached its maximum, Zeus addressed them as follows:

"Before, O Friends, we part from here repairing to Olympus, and eventually to Japan and China, I propose that Plato give us his serious impression of

what turn the next religious phase of the little ones will take. I entitle him even to say, with due moderation, what turn it shall take."

Plato, rising from his seat near Socrates and Aristotle, first bowed to Zeus, and then to Apollo whom he requested to allow his priests to intone the sacred hymn of Delphi. That hymn, Plato said, had been handed down from hoary antiquity, and was the song best fitted to fill the hearts of men with the sentiment of religion; the Roman Church, he added, still retained it. Apollo nodded consent, and forthwith the archons of Delphi, aided by the great choir of the Parthenon, filled the still night with mighty harmonies. The simple tunes rose into the heights like columns upon which the singers finally laid down capitals, architraves and pediments of serene melodies, until all Rome and the surrounding plains and valleys seemed changed into one vast musical temple, while the echo of the Albanian Mountains handed the rhythms and cadences on to stern Soracte and the Apennines.

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"I will not undertake," Plato said, "to determine what direction the new Religion of the little ones will take. That direction depends upon their whole life in peace and war, which is, and will remain, under your exclusive control, O Zeus. But if I am to outline what shape and function their Religion is likely to take in the near future, I feel more confident of acquitting myself creditably. This applies more parti-

cularly to the negative part of my task. I mean, it is quite possible to criticise the various schemes of new Religions proposed by a number of thinkers, and to say why these schemes will not succeed.

"The most numerous schemes of this description have been propounded by men of otherwise great abilities and accomplishments, such as Auguste Comte, and his followers in England and elsewhere. They have tried to establish rational Religions, or such in which Dionysus has no share. This is a vain attempt.

"Diogenes showed with great justice how all such attempts are doomed to failure.

"The more rational knowledge spreads both in bulk and in number of disciples, the more the little ones will need a Dionysiac religion.

"If the State or other ruling classes will not provide it properly, eccentrics and faddists will do so improperly.

"If the true enthusiasm for Art could really enter the hearts of the masses, then, and then alone, Religion need not be Dionysiac. However, this is impossible in nations consisting each of many millions of people.

"This is the greatness of your work, O Nietzsche. In your *Zarathustra* you worship Apollo with piety, but you entreat Dionysus too to enter the temple. However, you restrict your cult to the few, and for this reason you cannot succeed to a greater extent than did Pythagoras, who likewise closed the gates of his sanctuary to the Many.

"The question in Europe is how to let the Many feel the Light of Apollo and the Might of Dionysus. Unless this is done, nothing is done. Can Pro-

testantism do that? Calvin is fast aging, and his hair is quite white. Can Roman Catholicism do it?"

At these words of Plato the first matutinal choir came wafted from the Vatican. Plato made a pause. The Vestal Virgins bowed their heads. On Cæsar's expressive face there appeared a strange smile, and leaning over to Cicero, he whispered something into the ear of the great orator-statesman. Zeus remained immobile.

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Plato resumed thus: "The Romans of our time were to us Hellenes as Protestantism is to Catholicism. Will the Rome of this day be absorbed by the Protestants of the North as we were absorbed by ancient Rome?

"You used to say, O Machiavelli, that this world belongs to the cold hearts. That is probably quite true with regard to material things. But is it true with regard to spiritual ones?

"The North of Europe is cold; the South is warm. The former is romantic at its best, and eccentric at its worst; while the South is classic at its best, and irreverential at its worst. The North therefore will worship Apollo only in a haze, and Dionysus in distorted forms; while the South willingly bows to Apollo full of heavenly light, and accepts Dionysus only by means of a strict, hierarchical organisation.

"Can any Bach write one 'well-tempered' fugue

on both North and South? Can they in future be united in one belief?

"We have had so far two kinds of Religion only. One, those of small States, such as we had in Greece or Italy; the other, universal Religions, such as the Religion of Jesus, based on humans as mere abstracts, as mere equal atoms; Religions that applied to any person irrespective of State, race, class, or occupation. There are, however, now no small States such as we used to found, nor is all European humanity one vast conglomeration of atomic men.

"There are now new entities: nations.

"Will each of them develop her own Religion?

"Most likely, I think.

"It is with Religions as with Law and Language: each nation, the more high-strung it becomes, the more it differentiates its Law and its Language. In the Middle Ages, up to the twelfth century, there were not fifty languages in Europe. There are now far over a thousand.

"Each nation wants its own way of worshipping and representing Apollo and Dionysus. In countries full of musical enthusiasm the religious *rôle* of Dionysus is different from what it is in countries where music is not an organ of the national soul. Should Europe ever be levelled down to one United States of Europe (—at these words one could see Zeus smile with benignant sarcasm—) then there will arise new Religions in nearly every county of every country.

"In England we see the process clearly developing. The official Church is neither quite Apollo nor quite Dionysus; it is a product grown somewhere between Rome and Geneva, say at Leghorn.

"The unofficial Churches accept Dionysus only as enthusiasm for unenthusiastic matters, such as Puritanism; while Apollo with them is a Sunday school teacher.

"And this cannot be otherwise. An Imperialist nation cannot have an Imperialist Religion too, otherwise the heads of that Religion would run the Empire. The English, in the interest of their Empire, disintegrated their ancient Religion. In other words, they were bound to obscure Apollo and to degrade Dionysus by eccentricities.

"Take the Unitarians. Unable to find place for Dionysus in their over-rationalised Religion, they rush into moral eccentricities, such as a wholesale condemnation of war, a sickly philanthropy that yet seldom leaves the precincts of words, and other morbid habits.

"In England, Religion cannot be allowed its full-fledged growth. Should the English lose their Empire and, which is doubtful, yet survive as a small island-state, they will forthwith change their Religions, and the first of these to be dropped will be Anglicanism; while Methodism, in one of its extremer forms, is the most likely to replace all the others, should Catholicism not supplant it.

"The only new Christian Religion likely to arise in the British Empire is one in India, which will stand to British Christianity as the Greek Church stands to the Roman. I wonder why one or another of the British missionaries has not developed it long ago.

"In Great Britain herself a powerful new Religion cannot be devised as yet.

"It is quite different on the Continent; and

it is devoutly to be hoped that France will shake off her torpor and pour new religious enthusiasm into the soul of her nation.

"It is also to be hoped that the Japanese will at last adopt a Religion fitting their new status as a great nation. They will never accept Protestantism. They may accept some new form of Romanism, in that the great distance of Rome from Tokio guarantees them from too much interference, and because their next objective, the thousands of islands called the Philippines, have long been converted to Romanism.

"I have, in my travels on earth, frequently been asked whether our own beautiful Religion could not be revived again.

"To this the answer can hardly be doubtful. Our Religion was so intimately connected with our peculiar polity that unless such polities should be revived, our Religion cannot be reintroduced into the life of nations.

"In my Republic I have anticipated most of the political communities that have arisen after my death; and the Roman Church has fully confirmed my prediction, that the polity in which philosophers will be kings will be the most abiding of all. The restrictions which I placed on the various classes of my ideal Republic have not been literally observed by the Roman Church; she has laid upon them other restrictions.

"But then as now I say, that the greater the Ideal, the heavier price we have to pay for it.

"The little ones, listening to arm-chair experts, multi-millionaires and faddists, indulge in the childish belief that they will be able to bring Elysium down into their Assemblies, Market-places, and their Social

Life, by removing all severe conflicts, all cruelty, all relentless punishments, and similar necessities which are only the inevitable price paid for some great good. They think they will make the world more humane, by giving up any attempt at weeding out all the bad herbs among the human grass.

"They will never do it. If they want to have a Religion better than the one they have, they will have to pay an exceedingly heavy price for it.

"First is Calvary, and then comes the Resurrection.

"Religion is an Ideal, and hence very costly. If ever the general brotherhood of men should be realised, just for one year, the sacrifices to be paid for such a sublime ideal would be so immense that people would at once relapse into the other extreme.

"Nothing wiser ever fell from your lips, O Goethe, than your saying that 'nothing is more hard to endure than a series of three beautiful days.'

"We Greeks know it. We realised many an ideal; more than has been realised by any other people. Accordingly, we did not last very long. Do not covet the stars! Be satisfied with a little cottage in the midst of a small garden.

"But you were right, O Spinoza, that the whole essence of Man is concupiscence. He *will* desire and aspire after an endless array of things, all of which he wants to have for nothing.

"It is in vain that we tell him that there is no more expensive shop than that where gratification of desires is sold.

"In vain have all the Religions essayed to inculcate the lesson of resignation, one by threatening dire

punishments on earth, the other by menacing eternal pains in yonder world.

"Resignation is the last thing a human thinks of. He thinks he is so clever, so intelligent, so inventive and especially so 'progressive,' that he will bend Ideals to his will, as he has done with a few of the physical forces of Nature. He does not know that while other goods require only the abnegation of one or a few individuals, Ideals exact the privation of multitudes.

"Could we free Greeks have been what we were, had we not stood on the bodies of degraded slaves who relieved us of the drudgery of life? One cannot be free and a slave at the same time.

"In my deep conviction of the heavy sacrifices demanded for Ideals, I frequently think that we Greeks, and more particularly myself, who introduced this thirst for Ideals into the world, have thereby done Europe more harm than good.

"How many a time has the fate of Prometheus been re-enacted in millions of ideal-smitten Europeans! There he is, bound to a rock, while an eagle eats his liver, because he wanted to bring down Olympus to earth.

"The Religion that will teach man serene resignation; that will imbue him with the sense of the magnitude of Ideals; that will make him feel that Ideals are not for man, but for gods; that Religion will save him.

"None other.

"The priests of that Religion must be the first to exemplify that Resignation to the full. They must not preach Resignation while themselves dressed in purple and clothed in the amplest rights of Pre-

cedence, Authority, and Splendour. Will there ever be such priests?

"I doubt it. What priests want and what they have always wanted, is nothing but authority.

"They have founded and brought to its most consummate expression the science of authority-seeking. They know how to impress people. I do not hope that they will ever give up such a profitable accomplishment; and consequently no Religion of the future will have a remarkable success unless it enables its founders to invest many persons with great authority.

"The scant authority it gives to its incumbents is the chief weakness of Protestantism as compared with Roman Catholicism. This world is ruled by Authority; and so far, the other world too has been governed by the same means. And so at the end, as well as at the outset of our reflections on Life we start and come back to the same eternal truth, that practical life wants not truth as such, but only *effectology*.

"Truth proper, and independent of any practical effects, has its place only at the foot of Your Mighty Throne in Olympus, O Zeus.

"We Hellenes having been on a plane altogether higher than is that of the little ones, we dared to introduce some truths proper into our life. We sincerely called a spade a spade. We knew that some women and men must suffer, in order that others may fully develop their humanity; and so we instituted slavery, scorning, as we did, the half-measures of quarter, third, or three quarters liberty in men or women. We openly talked of the 'Envy of the gods,' which is one of the deepest truths of

life. And thus in many a custom, law, or measure of ours we had the courage to enshrine truth proper in the prose-frame of ordinary life.

"This emboldened me to think that there might one day be a State, a Republic, wholly built on eternal truths. And so I wrote my book hoping it would serve as a beacon-fire for all times and all humans.

"At present I know better. What people want, in Religion or Science, is *effectological* truth, and not truth proper. My book, as the rest of my work, has procured me a place in Olympus, but has not enabled me to conquer a single town of the nether-world.

"I too have learnt to resign myself.

"Truth, like Beauty, and Goodness, is not meant for the little ones. And yet they will in all times go on their pilgrimage to our shrines; through all ages they will worship Athens and mighty Rome as the true home of humanity; as the age and the men who had the divine courage of truthfulness, and the saving grace of Beauty."

Zeus and Juno rose from their chryselephantine seats. The shades of the night became lighter, and at a sign from Mercury, the whole divine Assembly left their places and moved through the air towards Olympus.

THE END

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